SONGS OF THE EXILE

SONGS OF THE EXILE.

BY

A BENGAL OFFICER.

The tent-ropes flapping, lone I hear,
For twilight converse arm in arm;
The Jackall's shriek bursts on mine ear,
When mirth and music wont to charm.

DR. LEYDEN'S *Ode to an Indian Gold Coin.*

EDINBURGH:

PRINTED FOR DAVID BROWN,

SOUTH ST. ANDREW'S STREET.

1820.

Printed by Balfour and Clarke,
Edinburgh, 1820.

Some of the following pieces appeared in the Periodical Papers of Calcutta. The facility of publication in this Country has induced the Author to take advantage of his present visit, to collect them (with some others written since his return) into a small volume. He looks for no other gratification, than the pleasure of leaving them, as a small token of his regard, amongst his friends in his native land, and of presenting them, as a trifling *nuzur*, to his friends in India, on his approaching return to that country.

Uttarpara Jaikrishna Public Library
Acc. No 22596 Date 9.9.02

To Helen.

Thy beauty is to me like those Nicean barks of yore,
That gently, o'er a perfumed sea, the weary, way-worn wanderer bore
To his own native shore.

On desperate seas long wont to roam,
Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,
Thy Naiad airs have brought me home
To the glory that was Greece
And the grandeur that was Rome.



SONGS OF THE EXILE.

IN FAR DISTANT CLIMES.

AIR—"*Auld Rob Morris.*"

In far distant climes, when the tear gushes o'er
For home, love, and friendship, that charm us no more,
Oh, what on the Exile's dark sorrows can shine,
Like the rapture that glows at the songs of Lang-syne.

The music of Scotia is sweet 'midst the scene,
But, ah! could you hear it when seas roll between,
'Tis then, and then only, the soul can divine,
The magic that dwells in the songs of Lang-syne.

The spirit, when torn from earth's objects of love,
Loses all its regrets in the chorus above,
So in exile we cannot but cease to repine,
When it hallows with ecstacy songs of Lang-syne.

Henceforth let me wander the wide world o'er,
Let home, love, and friendship delight me no more;
But leave me, Oh, leave me the solace benign,
And my soul shall exult in the songs of Lang-syne.

MAY IN INDIA.

Whilst o'er these plains the scorching blast
Destructive sweeps, I vainly mourn
For early scenes, like visions past,
For early loves that ne'er return.

And thou, to whom was meetly giv'n,
This once glad season's joyous name,
Far, far from thine my course is driv'n,
That I had thought might be the same.

'Tis thine a rural home to grace,
To share a rural husband's toil,
And, round thee see a rising race,
To prompt a joyful mother's smile.

Oh, how unlike thy early friend,
Undoom'd domestic bliss to know;
Here, where far Delhi's towers ascend,
I pour unheard an exile's woe.

Oh! could you see him whom you've left
A wretch on the wide world alone,
Of ev'ry native joy bereft,
That on life's happy morning shone!

Yet it will cheer my gloomy brow,
And almost teach me to resign,
To think, although another's now,
Thy earliest sweetest kiss was mine.

And where could meeter scene be found,
For unrequited love to weep?
Eternal languor rests around,
And silence reigns for ever deep.

Then fare thee well, on Scottish braes
Be home-endearing pleasures thine;
And India's melancholy days,
With dreams of love's first raptures, mine!

Delhi, 1814.

THE SUTTEE;

OR,

FUNERAL PILE.

The unhappy circumstance which gave rise to the following lines, occurred as the author was sailing down the Ganges in 1817.

Row, Moslems, row, stretch to the oar,
For, hark the cymbal's boding swells!
The sounds of death come from the shore,
Yon ready pile of murder tells.—
In mercy, to your oars now bend,
For see, the fun'ral flames ascend:
The Bramins mark our falcon way,
And fear to lose their destin'd prey.
Hark to their yells, they drown the shriek
Of one unlike them, mild, and meek.—

Well done, my bark! we've reach'd the shore,
The prow is now amidst the flame;
But all too late—she is no more—
A minute's space too late we came.
Poor Maid, that minute saw thee bloom,
And this we stand beside thy tomb;
A minute sooner, and thy charms
Had smil'd within my saving arms;
But, Oh! that minute's dire delay,
Has made thee what I may not say.

WRITTEN

ON THE MORNING THAT CONCLUDED MY TENTH YEAR OF EXILE.

Ten years have sped this very day,
Since that which I with tears recal,
When sad and slow I bent my way,
An exile from my father's hall:

Ten times that peaceful hall has seen,
The " gentle spring" in smiles returning;
Ten times the Winter, raging keen,
Has seen the cheerful faggots burning;
And ev'ry homefelt pleasure smiling,
Day after day the hours beguiling;
Whilst I, an outcast and alone,
One social joy have never known;
Condemn'd o'er seas and plains to roam,
A stranger to the name of home.
No fair one, life's best sweets to prove,
Forgotten is the thrill of love--
My breast to friendship's glow is dead—
Ev'n Scotia's magic spell is fled.
No solemn bell on Sabbath morn,
Has on the gale to me been borne,
Calling my steps to where the Tyne
Reflects a pure religion's shrine,
Till crimes have quench'd the holy fire,
That bade the soul to heav'n aspire;

If India's wealth was all my own,
Could it for loss of these atone?
Well did the verse of Homer flow,
"A wand'ring life's the greatest woe."

LINES

ON FINDING A JESSAMINE BUSH IN A FIELD OF BATTLE IN NEPAL, WHERE AN UNSUCCESSFUL SKIRMISH HAD TAKEN PLACE A SHORT TIME BEFORE WITH THE GOORKAHS, AND WHICH AT THIS TIME FORMED OUR ADVANCED POST.

Sacred to Love *, and canst thou bloom,
Whilst war's red streams beside thee flow,
Or waft around thy sweet perfume,
'Midst such a scene of death and woe!

* The Jessamine is the favourite flower of the Indian ladies.

The carnag'd field still sadly shows
Where Britons met their Goorkah foes,
Descending from their mountain tower,
Dreadful and swift as lightning's power,
Hurling their whole collected host,
Against our small devoted post:
And, mark, upon each cliff and dell,
The Sepoy rests as when he fell,
Save from his outstretch'd arm and hand,
The foe has reft the shield and brand,
Or where the prowling beasts of prey
Have nightly borne their meal away,
Leaving the half-ate ~~carcase~~ carcass vile,
To tell of war's unhappy toil.
And canst thou, lovely floweret, bloom
Whilst streams of blood beside thee flow,
Or waft around thy sweet perfume,
'Midst such a scene of death and woe!
Ill suited to thy mossy dell,
Resounds the loud exploding shell;

Alas! that cannon's sulph'rous cloud
With baleful wreath thy bowers should shroud,
Or that thy balmy scented grove
Hear vows of hate instead of love.
Yet welcome here, thou sweetest flower,
And doubly dear in danger's hour;
Thou com'st the brow of war to cheer,
And seem'st my better genius here.

LINES

WRITTEN FOR ST. ANDREW'S DAY, IN NEPAL, DURING NEGOCIATIONS FOR PEACE BETWIXT THE BRITISH AND NEPALESE POWERS.

No more on India's languid plains
We hail this glad returning day:
Where more than Scottish grandeur reigns,
Our peans to our Saint we pay.

What Scottish breast but rapture fills,
Whilst calling on that sacred name,
Midst pine-clad cliffs and dashing rills,
As wild as those from whence we came.

Tho' far from Scotia's darling strand,
Still to her shores our hearts are true;
And proudly here, our little band,
Their vows of filial love renew.

Hail then, our honour'd native clime,
To thee the full libation flows;
On mountain altars as sublime,
As where thy own lov'd thistle grows.

By that stern emblem here we pledge,
To prove its sterner motto true:
Should faithless foes provoke its rage,
They dearly shall their folly rue.

But let this night be peace and wine;
Let softer themes our songs employ;
Let love, and home, and auld lang-syne,
Light up our souls again with joy.

Or, does the pensive bosom mourn,
For early scenes and pleasures lost?
Fill, to the day of our return,
To homefelt joys on Scotia's coast.

Fill, that victorious, ever wave
The Thistle on our banner-tree;
That lasses fair, and warriors brave,
May grace the land for ever free.

SONG

WRITTEN ON THE CONCLUSION OF THE NEPAL WAR.

AIR—"*The Mill, Mill O.*"

THO' mountain echo, now no more
Is heard war's peal returning,
Peace can to me no joys restore,
Or soothe an exile's mourning.

For languid plains, and sultry days,
I sadly see appearing,
Nor friendship's glow, nor love's blest rays,
The dreary prospect cheering.

No cottage home shall smile for me,
Each much-lov'd haunt retracing,
Nor long-lov'd maid by trysting tree,
To meet my fond embracing.

Then let me like the Arab roam,
Each day new scenes beguiling;
For, oh! I may not think of home,
In social pleasures smiling.

WORDS

WRITTEN FOR A MAHRATTA AIR.

The first of October, which generally sees the rainy season of India at an end, and the harvest of the land begun, was the signal for the commencement of the predatory excursions of the Mahratta Pindarees; on which occasion a curious and most expressive ceremony took place:—A field of corn was purchased, and the soldiery, armed with sickles, at a given signal, rushed forward and swept it in an instant from the face of the earth.

1.

The rains are gone, the heaven's clear,
Reapers at their task appear,
Loud your steeds Mahrattas neigh!—

Seize the sword, the spear, the shield,
You shall reap a nobler field,
Quick to horse, away, away!

2.

City joys our souls disdain;
Dwellers on the tented plain,
Making dastards' wealth our prey;—
Rich the prize their coffers yield—
Seize the sword, the spear, the shield,
Quick to horse, away, away!

3.

Our stern souls disdain to move
With the peasant's sighing love;
First our swords the husband slay,
Rushing on we scale the towers,
Nobly won, the bride is ours,—
Quick to horse, away, away!

4

Hark! the glad resounding cheers,
See, our gallant chief appears!
Yonder float his banners gay;
Dark the host of spearsmen forms,
Dreadful as our native storms,
On it rolls, away, away!

ON AN INDIAN BEAUTY.

O, LEILA, for a soul sublime,
To match that lovely face of thine!
And the bright fair of Britain's clime
Should never claim a sigh of mine.

LINES.

1.

THE pangs of absence I can bear,
When solitude gives vent to woe;
But doom'd this ill-tim'd mirth to hear,
To feign a smile, and check the tear,
'Tis then I sink beneath the blow.
And madly quaff the offer'd bowl,
Not, Leila, from my love to flee—
To give oblivion to the soul
That cannot give itself to thee.

2.

A lovely star of fairest sheen,
Arose my Indian night to cheer,
But soon a cloud roll'd dark between,
And bade its lustre disappear;
Then night return'd more dark and drear,
And left me darkling sad to roam,

Despair my sole companion here,
And lost to all the joys of home.

3.

And must I then so soon resign
This fondly cherish'd latest glow,
And was it but the farewell shine,
That, 'midst the storm, to earth below,
Thro' broken clouds, the sun-beams throw,
Ere yet the gathering tempest close;
A beam that only lets us know,
The blessings we're about to lose.

4.

Though calm reflection through the day
Tells me we now are only friends,
Yet, oh! when night gives fancy sway,
Usurping love the throne ascends:
The day's wise dictates far he spurns,
And doubly fir'd from late controul,
With all a tyrant's rage he burns,
And desolates his subject soul.

THE MEETING.

AND is it thus we two must ~~meet~~ greet,
With cold regard and studied phrase;
We, who in rapture us'd to meet,
By rushing to the fond embrace!

O! dreadful hour and most severe,
Of all I have endur'd for thee,
Condemn'd to bid thee welcome here,
While seated on my rival's knee.

Upon our first blythe meeting day,
Could I have seen reverse like this,
With how much horror and dismay,
I should have dropp'd the cup of bliss!

Transform'd into a cup of woe,
I strive to pass it now in vain;
Nor can I yet it's draught forego,
Tho' doom'd it's very dregs to drain.

ON SAILING FROM DELHI, 1814.

Adieu to Delhi's halls and towers,
And revel's palling train;
Welcome ye rivers, fields, and bowers,
Of nature's lovely reign.

Not swifter from yon turrets high
Our bark skims Jumna's face,
Than I from city follies fly
To nature's pure embrace.

O! nature, at thy glorious shrine
A prodigal receive;
My heart's true vows were ever thine,
Those broken vows forgive.

Can th' apostate on thee gaze,
And not repentant be?
Who can behold thy smiling face,
Nor wish him pure as thee?

ON READING,

IN THE NEWSPAPERS OF INDIA, THE DEATH OF THE AUTHOR OF THE SABBATH.

1.

Oh! that my muse were equal to the theme,
Or equal to my grief my verse could flow,
Then to thy mem'ry, O lamented Graham,
Sweet as thy own my plaintive notes should flow.
The harp that should have wak'd this song of woe,
On Java's strand unstrung for ever lies:
The Bard * of Ind, who could the wreath bestow,
With thee has fled our sphere, and in the skies
Your kindred souls have met, unwrung by parting sighs.

* Dr. Leyden, who died about the same time.

2.

There, while your golden lyres ecstatic ring
Celestial sounds to more exalted lay,
Her wild-flow'r wreath my sorrowing muse shall bring,
And to thy mem'ry humble homage pay;
For oft thy song upon the hallow'd day,
From India's plains, where Sabbaths never smil'd,
Has borne me to my native hills away,
And streteh'd me on the heath of mountain wild,
Beside the shepherd boy, and exile's pangs beguil'd.

3.

While Sabbath morn shall shed its holy calm
O'er Scotia's peaceful glens, and broom-clad braes,
While from the cot is heard the chaunted psalm,
Meek bard of Zion, thy accordant lays
Shall glad the pious heart; and he who strays
In distant regions far beyond the main,
While fondly musing upon early days,
Shall to the heathen groves enraptur'd pour thy strain.

4.

When thou, mild pilgrim, bad'st the world adieu,
O! who the rapture of thy bliss can tell?
Thy pure and disembodied spirit flew
T' enjoy the scene it lov'd and sung so well.
But we with sorrow heard the passing knell,
Of worth, of genius, and lov'd melody,
But latest time shall hear thy harp's soft swell,—
Thy muse forbids thy sacred name to die;
And thou, sweet bard, hast reach'd the Sabbath of the sky.

WRITTEN

ON THE KING'S BIRTH DAY, 1814.

Again revolves the sacred day
That gave our much-lov'd Sov'reign birth,
Grateful, yet solemn be the lay,
And far be all untimely mirth.

For, lo ! his ev'ning's setting rays
Declare his warfare nearly done,
But glory marks his righteous days,
And nobly has his race been run.

Amidst the wreck of nations round,
On George's reign peace sweetly smiles ;
And glorious Freedom still has found
Her home is in the British isles.

What British bosom doth not glow
To hail the day our liege was born ;
What Briton can behold his wo,
And not with patriot anguish mourn !

ELEGIAC LINES

TO THE

MEMORY OF THE REV. DAVID BROWN OF CALCUTTA.

Long, Hoogly, has thy sullen stream
Been doom'd the cheerless shores to lave;
Long has the Suttee's * baleful gleam
Pale glimmer'd o'er thy midnight wave.

Yet gladden'd seems to flow thy tide
Where opens on the view, Aldeen †;
For there, to grace thy palmy side,
Lov'd England's purest joys were seen.

* Suttee, the funeral pile on which the Hindoo widow consumes herself with her husband's body.

† Mr. Brown's country seat, above Calcutta.

Yes! led by friendship's fav'ring hand,
I've sheltered in thy happy bowers,
Where, strangers to this barb'rous land,
Domestic pleasures charm'd the hours.

And oft, since then, in camps afar,
Unfriended, joyless, as I rov'd,
Amidst the pealing notes of war,
My mind recalled the scene belov'd.

I saw in fancy's soothing dream
The sire amidst his smiling band,
Delighted rear, by Hoogley's stream,
The virtues of a better land.

But sad my fancy now returns
To trace the fond remember'd shore;
And sad my eyes in sorrow mourns
For him who lends it joy no more.

And ye who now in deepest wo,
Its banks behold a pensive train,
Permit my tears with yours to flow,
Accept my sympathizing strain.

Yon dome *, 'neath which, in former days,
Grim idols mark'd the pagan shrine,
He taught to swell with notes of praise,
Attun'd to themes of truth divine.

Memorial meet of his bless'd zeal,
To illume the realms of pagan night,
To let the waiting nations feel
The joys of Revelation's light.

The Indian pilgrim there shall stray,
And, as fond memory prompts the tear,
Shall, grateful, to his children say,
"Our benefactor worshipp'd here."

* A Hindoo Temple on Mr. Brown's grounds, which he converted into a Chapel.

Farewell, thy pleasing manners gave
 This clime the charm of Britain's isle ;
Thy faith, triumphant o'er the grave,
 Beheld its terrors with a smile.

May we the lesson taught receive,
 (While angels greet thee to the sky,)
In sacred pleasure here to live,
 With conscience whisp'ring peace to die *.

* These verses were published in the Memoirs of Mr. Brown, with a few unnecessary verbal alterations, from my M.S.

SONNETS

WRITTEN IN SAILING DOWN THE GANGES.

1.

GANGES, thy mighty flood before me roll'd,
The gorgeous temples on thy banks that shine,
With disregard my tearful eyes behold;
Give me the murmurs of my native Tyne.

There, sweeter far than thy vast sullen flow
The sparkling stream that o'er its channel plays;
And lov'lier too than thy proud fanes that glow,
The hawthorn blossom, and the broom-clad braes.

Long, lonely, exil'd, home-sick, and forlorn,
Ganges, I've wandered on thy cheerless shore,
And now, too late returning, hapless mourn
That home itself can glad my soul no more.
Not ev'n the murmurs of my native Tyne
Can my lost peace restore, or soothe a pang like mine.

2.

My bark at anchor in the creek below;
Lone on the palm-crown'd cliff I lingering stray,
Gazing where Ganges flood, profound and slow,
Rolls far and wide beneath the moon's pale ray.

But tho' the scene be solemn and sublime,
With it no fond associations rise;
'Tis home alone that can endear the clime,
And cheer the heart as well as charm the eyes.

And shall my pilgrim footsteps once more rove
Where now yon moon, with more delighted beam,
Is slowly rising o'er the dark pine grove,
To gild the waters of my native stream?
O, then, if ever, my torn heart shall lose,
The thought of Leila lost, the mem'ry of it's woes.

ON READING

LORD BYRON'S "FARE THEE WELL."

CHILD of weird fancy's wildest mood,
And first among the sons of song,
In vain the household gods were sued,
'Tis not to these thy vows belong:
'Tis thine, the storms of life among,
To worship at Romance's shrine,
Where warring passions (guilty throng,)
Give theme to thy immortal line.

LINES

ON THE BRITISH FAIR IN INDIA.

WHEN wild the storms of ocean rave,
The sea-fowl on its native wave
No more delighted rests:

Spread over inland valleys green,
The silver sea-mews then are seen
Bright, lov'ly, stranger-guests:
Lending to scenes of rural mildness
The beauteous glow of ocean's wildness.

So do the fair of Britain's isle,
When wafted to Indostan's strand,
Amidst the sable nations smile
Like angels from the fairy-land.

SONNET

ON SAILING FROM INDIA.

Ocean, with raptures wild mine eyes explore
Thy boundless world of waters blue again;
How spirit-rousing is thy thund'ring roar,
After the languor of Indostan's plain.

Sad clime, adieu! yet in thy realms dwell
The friends in exile ever render'd dear;
For them I feel an anguish in farewell,
And see the land receding thro' the tear.

And thou, my Leila, tho' belov'd in vain,
Thy name still binds me to thy hapless shore,
Thy charms shall haunt my visions on the main,
Thy mem'ry bid the Scottish dells deplore.
O, I can wish our glance had never met,
But, never, never, can that glance forget.

SONNET

ON A GALE AT SEA.

Leila, how chang'd the scene, since in thy bower,
With rosy garlands crown'd, entranc'd I lay,
To hear thy silver voice so sweetly pour
The love-sick strain of India's balmy day.

Now, on the tempest-troubl'd ocean cast,
From rifted wave to gulph by turns I'm driv'n;
For thy soft lyre I hear the cordag'd mast
Swept loudly by the angry blasts of heav'n.

But Night, with dreams upon the waves descends,
And tempests only rock to sounder sleep,
For raging seas the palmy plain extends,
And lulls to Leila's song the roaring deep.
Dear is the vision, till the morn again
Gives to my sick'ning view the wild resounding main.

SONNET.

SABBATH AT SEA.

'Twas Sabbath morn, and lonely o'er the swell
Of India's ocean far our vessel flew,
When o'er the waters slowly toll'd the bell,
Assembling at the stern the decent crew

There 'neath the shade the red-cross ensign flings,
To Him the voice of prayer and praise was sent,
Whose hand upholds, though on the morning's wings
Our course o'er seas the most remote be bent.

No need was here of organ's pealing chime
To raise within the breast devotion's fire;
Dread ocean roll'd an anthem more sublime,
Nature's own voice God's worshippers inspire.
Rest we beneath our vine, or plough the sea,
Our sweetest solace springs, O piety, from thee.

LINES

WRITTEN ON SAILING OVER THAT PART OF THE INDIAN OCEAN WHERE FALCONER, THE AUTHOR OF THE "SHIPWRECK," IS SUPPOSED TO HAVE PERISHED.

Deep, deep below, in coral cave,
The minstrel of the ocean lies,
And meetly o'er his wat'ry grave
The sea he sung now sadly sighs.

What son of song could callous sail
Above thy distant early bier,
Nor pour his sorrows to the gale,
Nor mingle with the surge his tear?

Tho' here no rural virgins grieve,
Or deck with rural gifts thy urn;
The sea-nymphs meeter flowers shall weave,
As round thy coral cave they mourn.

So long as ocean's waves shall flow
Shall Falconer's verse roll bright in fame;
While pity melts at others' woe,
Arion's fate the tear shall claim.

Deep, deep below, in coral cave,
The minstrel of the ocean lies,
And meetly o'er his wat'ry grave
The sea he sung now sadly sighs.

LINES

WRITTEN AFTER HAVING DOUBLED THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE IN A HEAVY GALE.

The howling Cape of Storms is past,—
Now homeward points our vessel's prow:
Hush'd is the loud tempest'ous blast,—
O'er summer seas soft breezes blow.

Glide slowly, vessel, o'er the main,
Mild is the day and bright the sky,
While sad and drear my native plain
Sees cheerful spring her smiles deny.

But e'er our bark can reach that strand,
Old winter will have pass'd away,
And all luxuriant o'er the land
Shall smile the glorious reign of May

But thou who wert my bosom's sun,
Thy charms again shall cheer me never,—
To me thy summer smiles are done,
And winter clouds my soul for ever.

THE FIRST OF MAY AT SEA.

MAY, long on India's blazing plain
Thou bad'st mine exil'd muse deplore,
But now beneath thy joyous reign
I seek again my native shore.

But, oh! how alter'd since that day
That saw me leave my natal clime;
The rosy health, the spirits gay,
The bosom undefil'd with crime.

And she, who taught my breast to burn
With purest love's resistless flame,
Can never bless my late return,
Nor may I whisper now her name.

Yet, oh! indulgent gracious power,
Safe from disease, the storm, the sword,
Thee let my grateful heart adore,
And all thy mercies there record.

SONG

AIR—"*The Lea Rig.*"

SEE, rising frae the ocean blue,
Old England's cliffs are peering high,
And from the deck the joyous crew
Send o'er the main the cheering cry!

With bounding heart I spring ashore,
The haunts of youth appear, my jo,—
Into thy arms I rush once more,
My long lost dearie, O.

Tho' vainly I've rov'd India's plain,
In quest of worldly gear, my jo,
I've wealth enough, if you're my ain,
My long lost dearie, O.

Gie me a cot beside the stream,
An ingle that burns cheerie, O,
My rustic muse, and thee the theme,
My long lost dearie, O.

The sailor tempts the raging main,
All eager to engage the foe;
The soldier seeks th' embattl'd plain,
In glory's bright career to go:

But what's the proudest wreath of fame
Ambition's brow can wear, my jo,
Compar'd wi' the calm joys o' hame,
My ain kind dearie, O.

SONG.

AIR—"*Macgregor's Lament.*"

YES! these are thy murmurs, my own native river,
And the maids on thy banks are as lovely as ever;
And sweet as lang-syne, thro' the copses are ringing
The notes of the mavis at gloamin-hour singing.

But the exile, too late, to the Tyne-banks returning,
Alone, 'midst the landscape, all haggard is mourning;
For the glow that fair nature and beauty imparted,
From the breast of the wretched Hindoo has departed.

SONG.

AIR—"*Sheelah O'Neal.*"

TO A SCOTCH BEAUTY.

THERE never was onie, sae modest and bonie.
At these brighter charms of my own native land
My heart beats adoring, then falls to deploring
That Leila still binds it to India's strand.

While lonely I wander'd, where Ganges meander'd,
Had a vision of thee come timely to save;
In freedom returning, my breast had been burning,
To say let me ever kneel humbly thy slave.

SONG.

AIR—"*A Red, Red Rose.*"

My love charms like th' ethereal fire
That lights the poet's soul,
Her voice like notes that [illegible] the lyre
Of wand'ring breezes roll.

Altho' to such bright charms as thine
I may not lift mine eyes,
In secret, ever at their shrine,
I'll worship with my sighs.

And they shall be the guiding star
Thro' many an exiled year;
To soothe the ruthless trade of war,
The midnight watch to cheer.

I ask no plighted vows, my love,
Enough you've bless'd mine eyes;
The lonely spirit now can prove
The love that never dies.

LINES

ON A SPRIG OF HEATH.

Flower of the wild, more dear to me
Than all the garden's breathing sweets,
Whene'er thy purple blooms I see
My breast with glad sensations beats;
Thou art the pledge of lone retreats,
(From human affectation free,)
Where joyous echo still repeats,
The songs of mountain liberty.

ON HEARING

A LADY SING A HINDOO SONG IN SCOTLAND.

AIR—"*Loch Erroch Side.*"

O! wake once more that eastern strain,
And charm the vision back again;
I saw wide o'er the palmy plain,
The sea-like Ganges flowing.

'Twas ev'ning, calm on nature's breast,
The tropic day reclined oppress;
The sun amidst the gorgeous west
With triumph's flush was glowing.

O, sweetest there his farewell ray,
Like tyrant's rage just pass'd away,
And bosoms now with rapture play,
To see mild eve prevailing.

Now sunk is Phœbus' blazing car,
See Love unveils his silver star;
And hark, the Minstrel's soft guitar
The hour of bliss is hailing.

Slow, from the east, night's lovely queen,
Advancing o'er the palms is seen,
Her modest glow and smile serene,
The magic spell completing.

Meet hour for hermit musing high,—
Dear to the gifted poet's eye,—
And blest by raptur'd lover's sigh,
Who waits the trysted meeting.

FINIS.

Printed by Balfour and Clarke,
Edinburgh, 1820.

BRITANNICUS,

TRAGÉDIE

DE RACINE.

IMPRIMERIE DE FAIN, RUE DE RACINE,
PLACE DE L'ODÉON.

BRITANNICUS,

TRAGÉDIE

DE RACINE;

Représentée, pour la première fois, sur le théâtre de l'Hôtel de Bourgogne, par la Troupe royale, en décembre 1669.

NOUVELLE ÉDITION,

CONFORME A LA REPRÉSENTATION.

PRIX : 1 fr. 50 CENT.

A PARIS,

CHEZ { BARBA, Libraire, au Palais-Royal, derrière le Théâtre Français, n°. 51 ;
HUBERT, Libraire, au Palais-Royal, Galeries de bois, côté du jardin, n°. 222.

1817.

PRÉFACE.

Voici celle de mes tragédies que je puis dire que j'ai le plus travaillée. Cependant j'avoue que le succès ne répondit pas d'abord à mes espérances. A peine elle parut sur le théâtre, qu'il s'éleva quantité de critiques qui semblaient la vouloir détruire. Je crus moi-même que sa destinée serait, à l'avenir, moins heureuse que celle de mes autres tragédies. Mais enfin il est arrivé de cette pièce ce qui arrivera toujours des ouvrages qui auront quelque bonté: les critiques se sont évanouies, la pièce est demeurée. C'est maintenant celle des miennes que la cour et le public revoyent le plus volontiers; et si j'ai fait quelque chose de solide, et qui mérite quelque louange, la plupart des connaisseurs demeurent d'accord que c'est ce même Britannicus.

A la vérité, j'avais travaillé sur des modèles qui m'avaient extrêmement soutenu dans la peinture que je voulais faire de la cour d'Agrippine et de Néron. J'avais copié mes personnages d'après le plus grand peintre de l'antiquité, je veux dire d'après Tacite; et j'étais alors si rempli de la lecture de cet excellent historien, qu'il n'y a presque pas un trait éclatant dans ma tragédie dont il ne m'ait donné l'idée. J'avais voulu mettre dans ce recueil un extrait des plus beaux endroits que j'ai tâché d'imiter; mais j'ai trouvé que cet extrait tiendrait presque autant de place que la tragédie. Ainsi le lecteur trouvera bon que je le renvoye à cet auteur, qui aussi-bien est entre les mains de tout le monde; et je me contenterai de rapporter ici quelques-uns de ses passages sur chacun des personnages que j'introduis sur la scène.

Pour commencer par Néron, il faut se souvenir qu'il est ici dans les premières années de son règne, qui ont été heureuses, comme l'on sait. Ainsi il ne m'a pas été permis de le représenter aussi méchant qu'il a été depuis. Je ne le représente pas non plus comme un homme vertueux; car il ne l'a jamais été. [illegible] n'a pas encore tué sa mère, sa femme, ses gouverneurs, mais

il a eu lui les semences de tous ces crimes; il commence à vouloir secouer le joug; il les hait les uns et les autres; il leur cache sa haine sous de fausses caresses : *Factus naturâ velare odium fallacibus blanditiis.* En un mot, c'est ici un monstre naissant, mais qui n'ose encore se déclarer, et qui cherche des couleurs à ses méchantes actions : *Hactenùs Nero flagitiis et sceleribus velamenta quæsivit.* Il ne pouvait souffrir Octavie, princesse d'une bonté et d'une vertu exemplaires : *Fato quodam, an quia prævalent illicita. Metuebaturque ne in stupra fœminarum illustrium prorumperet.*

Je lui donne Narcisse pour confident. J'ai suivi en cela Tacite, qui dit que Néron porta impatiemment la mort de Narcisse, parce que cet affranchi avait une conformité merveilleuse avec les vices du prince encore cachés. *Cujus abditis adhuc vitiis mirè congruebat.* Ce passage prouve deux choses : il prouve, et que Néron était déjà vicieux, mais qu'il dissimulait ses vices, et que Narcisse l'entretenait dans ses mauvaises inclinations.

J'ai choisi Burrhus, pour opposer un honnête homme à cette peste de cour; et je l'ai choisi plutôt que Sénèque. En voici la raison : ils étaient tous deux gouverneurs de la jeunesse de Néron, l'un pour les armes, et l'autre pour les lettres; et ils étaient fameux, Burrhus pour son expérience dans les armes, et pour la sévérité de ses mœurs, *militaribus curis et severitate morum;* Sénèque pour son éloquence, et le tour agréable de son esprit, *Seneca præceptis eloquentiæ et comitate honestâ.* Burrhus, après sa mort, fut extrêmement regretté à cause de sa vertu : *Civitati grande desiderium ejus mansit per memoriam virtutis.*

Toute leur peine était de résister à l'orgueil et à la férocité d'Agrippine, *Quæ, cunctis malæ dominationis cupidinibus flagrans, habebat in partibus Pallantem.* Je ne dis que ce mot d'Agrippine, car il y aurait trop de choses à dire. C'est elle que je me suis surtout efforcé de bien exprimer, et ma tragédie n'est pas moins la disgrâce d'Agrippine que la mort de Britannicus. « Cette » mort fut un coup de foudre pour elle; et il parut

» (dit Tacite), par sa frayeur et sa consternation, » qu'elle était aussi innocente de cette mort qu'Octa- » vie. Agrippine perdait en lui sa dernière espérance, » et ce crime lui en faisait craindre un plus grand : » *Sibi supremum auxilium ereptum, et parricidii exemplum intelligebat.*

L'âge de Britannicus était si connu qu'il ne m'était pas permis de le représenter autrement que comme un jeune prince qui avait beaucoup de cœur, beaucoup d'amour, et beaucoup de franchise, qualités ordinaires d'un jeune homme. Il avait quinze ans, et on dit qu'il avait beaucoup d'esprit, soit qu'on dise vrai, ou que ses malheurs aient fait croire cela de lui, sans qu'il ait pu en donner des marques : *Neque segnem ei fuisse indolem ferunt, sive verum, seu periculis commendatus retinuit famam sine experimento.*

Il ne faut pas s'étonner s'il n'a auprès de lui qu'un aussi méchant homme que Narcisse ; car il y avait long-temps qu'on avait donné ordre qu'il n'y eût auprès de Britannicus que des gens qui n'eussent ni foi, ni honneur : *Nam ut proximus quisque Britannico neque fas neque fidem pensi haberet, olim provisum erat.*

Il me reste à parler de Junie. Il ne la faut pas confondre avec une vieille coquette qui s'appelait *Junia Silana*. C'est ici une autre Junie que Tacite appelle *Junia Calvina*, de la famille d'Auguste, sœur de Silanus, à qui Claudius avait promis Octavie. Cette Junie était jeune, belle, et, comme dit Sénèque, *festivissima omnium puellarum*. Son frère et elle s'aimaient tendrement, « et leurs ennemis (dit Tacite) les accu- « sèrent tous deux d'inceste, quoiqu'ils ne fussent coupa- « bles que d'un peu d'indiscrétion. » Elle vécut jusqu'au règne de Vespasien.

Je la fais entrer dans les vestales, quoique, selon Aulugelle, on n'y reçût jamais personne au-dessous de six ans, ni au-dessus de dix. Mais le peuple prend ici Junie sous sa protection, et j'ai cru qu'en considération de sa naissance, de sa vertu et de son malheur, il pouvait la dispenser de l'âge prescrit par les lois, comme il a dispensé de l'âge pour le consulat tant de grands hommes qui avaient mérité ce privilége.

PERSONNAGES.

NÉRON, empereur, fils d'Agrippine.
BRITANNICUS, fils de l'empereur Claudius.
BURRHUS, gouverneur de Néron.
NARCISSE, gouverneur de Britannicus.

AGRIPPINE, veuve de Domitius Ænobarbus, père de Néron; et, en secondes noces, veuve de l'empereur Claudius.
JUNIE, amante de Britannicus.
ALBINE, confidente d'Agrippine.

CHEF DES GARDES.
GARDES.

La scène est à Rome, dans une chambre du palais de Néron

Nota. On a observe, dans l'impression, l'ordre des places des personnages, en commençant par la gauche des spectateurs (ce qui est la droite des acteurs). Les changemens de places, qui ont lieu dans le cours des scènes, sont indiqués par des renvois au bas des pages.

Les noms des personnages imprimés en caractères *penchés* (ou *italiques*) indiquent qu'ils ne sont pas sur le devant de la scène.

D. L. P.

BRITANNICUS,

TRAGÉDIE.

ACTE PREMIER.

SCÈNE I.

ALBINE, AGRIPPINE.

ALBINE.

Quoi, tandis que Néron s'abandonne au sommeil,
Faut-il que vous veniez attendre son réveil?
Qu'errant dans le palais, sans suite et sans escorte,
La mère de César veille seule à sa porte?
Madame, retournez dans votre appartement.

AGRIPPINE.

Albine, il ne faut pas s'éloigner un moment:
Je veux l'attendre ici. Les chagrins qu'il me cause
M'occuperont assez tout le temps qu'il repose.
Tout ce que j'ai prédit n'est que trop assuré:
Contre Britannicus Néron s'est déclaré.
L'impatient Néron cesse de se contraindre;
Las de se faire aimer, il veut se faire craindre.
Britannicus le gêne, Albine; et, chaque jour,
Je sens que je deviens importune à mon tour.

ALBINE.

Quoi, vous à qui Néron doit le jour qu'il respire?
Qui l'avez appelé de si loin à l'empire?
Vous qui, déshéritant le fils de Claudius,
Avez nommé César l'heureux Domitius?
Tout lui parle, madame, en faveur d'Agrippine.
Il vous doit son amour.

AGRIPPINE.

Il me le doit, Albine:

Tout, s'il est généreux, lui prescrit cette loi ;
Mais tout, s'il est ingrat, lui parle contre moi.

ALBINE.

S'il est ingrat, madame ! Ah ! toute sa conduite
Marque dans son devoir une âme trop instruite !
Depuis trois ans entiers, qu'a-t-il dit, qu'a-t-il fait,
Qui ne promette à Rome un empereur parfait ?
Rome, depuis trois ans, par ses soins gouvernée,
Au temps de ses consuls croit être retournée :
Il la gouverne en père. Enfin, Néron naissant
A toutes les vertus d'Auguste vieillissant.

AGRIPPINE.

Non, non, mon intérêt ne me rend point injuste
Il commence, il est vrai, par où finit Auguste ;
Mais crains que, l'avenir détruisant le passé,
Il ne finisse ainsi qu'Auguste a commencé.
Il se déguise en vain : je lis sur son visage
Des fiers Domitius l'humeur triste et sauvage.
Il mêle avec l'orgueil, qu'il a pris dans leur sang,
La fierté des Nérons, qu'il puisa dans mon flanc.
Toujours la tyrannie a d'heureuses prémices.
De Rome, pour un temps, Caius fut les délices ;
Mais, sa feinte bonté se tournant en fureur,
Les délices de Rome en devinrent l'horreur.
Que m'importe, après tout, que Néron, plus fidèle,
D'une longue vertu laisse un jour le modèle ?
Ai-je mis dans sa main le timon de l'état,
Pour le conduire au gré du peuple et du sénat ?
Ah ! que de la patrie il soit, s'il veut, le père ;
Mais qu'il songe un peu plus qu'Agrippine est sa mère.
De quel nom cependant pouvons-nous appeler
L'attentat que le jour vient de nous révéler ?
Il sait, car leur amour ne peut être ignorée,
Que de Britannicus Junie est adorée ;
Et ce même Néron, que la vertu conduit,
Fait enlever Junie au milieu de la nuit.
Que veut-il ? Est-ce haine, est-ce amour qui l'inspire ?
Cherche-t-il seulement le plaisir de leur nuire ?
Ou plutôt n'est-ce point que sa malignité
Punit sur eux l'appui que je leur ai prêté ?

ALBINE.

Vous, leur appui, madame !

AGRIPPINE.

Arrête, chère Albine.
Je sais que j'ai moi seule avancé leur ruine;
Que du trône, où le sang l'a dû faire monter,
Britannicus par moi s'est vu précipiter.
Par moi seule, éloigné de l'hymen d'Octavie,
Le frère de Junie abandonna la vie,
Silanus, sur qui Claude avait jeté les yeux,
Et qui comptait Auguste au rang de ses aïeux.
Néron jouit de tout; et moi, pour récompense,
Il faut qu'entre eux et lui je tienne la balance,
Afin que, quelque jour, par une même loi,
Britannicus la tienne entre mon fils et moi.

ALBINE.

Quel dessein!

AGRIPPINE.

Je m'assure un port dans la tempête.
Néron m'échappera si ce frein ne l'arrête.

ALBINE.

Mais prendre contre un fils tant de soins superflus!

AGRIPPINE.

Je le craindrais bientôt, s'il ne me craignait plus.

ALBINE.

Une juste frayeur vous alarme peut-être.
Mais si Néron pour vous n'est plus ce qu'il doit être,
Du moins son changement ne vient pas jusqu'à nous;
Et ce sont des secrets entre César et vous.
Quelques titres nouveaux que Rome lui défère,
Néron n'en reçoit point qu'il ne donne à sa mère.
Sa prodigue amitié ne se réserve rien.
Votre nom est dans Rome aussi saint que le sien.
A peine parle-t-on de la triste Octavie.
Auguste votre aïeul honora moins Livie.
Néron, devant sa mère, a permis le premier
Qu'on portât les faisceaux couronnés de laurier.
Quels effets voulez-vous de sa reconnaissance?

AGRIPPINE.

Un peu moins de respect, et plus de confiance.
Tous ces présens, Albine, irritent mon dépit.
Je vois mes honneurs croître, et tomber mon crédit.

Non, non, le temps n'est plus que Néron jeune encore
Me renvoyait les vœux d'une cour qui l'adore;
Lorsqu'il se reposait sur moi de tout l'état;
Que mon ordre au palais assemblait le sénat;
Et que, derrière un voile, invisible et présente,
J'étais de ce grand corps l'âme toute-puissante.
Des volontés de Rome alors mal assuré,
Néron de sa grandeur n'était point enivré.
Ce jour, ce triste jour frappe encor ma mémoire,
Où Néron fut lui-même ébloui de sa gloire,
Quand les ambassadeurs de tant de rois divers
Vinrent le reconnaître au nom de l'univers:
Sur son trône, avec lui, j'allais prendre ma place.
J'ignore quel conseil prépara ma disgrâce;
Quoi qu'il en soit, Néron, d'aussi loin qu'il me vit,
Laissa sur son visage éclater son dépit:
Mon cœur même en conçut un malheureux augure.
L'ingrat, d'un faux respect colorant son injure,
Se leva par avance; et courant m'embrasser,
Il m'écarta du trône où je m'allais placer.
Depuis ce coup fatal, le pouvoir d'Agrippine
Vers sa chute, à grands pas, chaque jour s'achemine
L'ombre seule m'en reste; et l'on n'implore plus
Que le nom de Sénèque, et l'appui de Burrhus.

ALBINE.

Ah! si de ce soupçon votre âme est prévenue,
Pourquoi nourrissez-vous un venin qui vous tue?
Allez avec César vous éclaircir du moins.

AGRIPPINE.

César ne me voit plus, Albine, sans témoins.
En public, à mon heure, on me donne audience.
Sa réponse est dictée, et même son silence.
Je vois deux surveillans, ses maîtres et les miens,
Présider l'un ou l'autre à tous nos entretiens.
Mais je le poursuivrai d'autant plus qu'il m'évite.
De son désordre, Albine, il faut que je profite.
J'entends du bruit: on ouvre. Allons subitement
Lui demander raison de cet enlèvement.
Surprenons, s'il se peut, les secrets de son âme.

SCÈNE II.

ALBINE, AGRIPPINE, BURRHUS.

AGRIPPINE.

Mais quoi, déjà Burrhus sort de chez lui?

BURRHUS.

Madame,
Au nom de l'empereur, j'allais vous informer
D'un ordre, qui d'abord a pu vous alarmer;
Mais qui n'est que l'effet d'une sage conduite
Dont César a voulu que vous soyez instruite.

AGRIPPINE.

Puisqu'il le veut, entrons; il m'en instruira mieux.

BURRHUS.

César, pour quelque temps, s'est soustrait à nos yeux.
Déjà, par une porte au public moins connue,
L'un et l'autre consuls vous avaient prévenue,
Madame. Mais souffrez que je retourne exprès....

AGRIPPINE.

Non, je ne trouble point ses augustes secrets.
Cependant voulez-vous qu'avec moins de contrainte,
L'un et l'autre, une fois, nous nous parlions sans feinte?

BURRHUS.

Burrhus pour le mensonge eut toujours trop d'horreur.

AGRIPPINE.

Prétendez-vous long-temps me cacher l'empereur?
Ne le verrai-je plus qu'à titre d'importune?
Ai-je donc élevé si haut votre fortune,
Pour mettre une barrière entre mon fils et moi?
Ne l'osez-vous laisser un moment sur sa foi?
Entre Sénèque et vous disputez-vous la gloire,
A qui m'effacera plus tôt de sa mémoire?
Vous l'ai-je confié pour en faire un ingrat?
Pour être, sous son nom, les maîtres de l'état?
Certes, plus je médite, et moins je me figure
Que vous m'osiez compter pour votre créature;
Vous, dont j'ai pu laisser vieillir l'ambition
Dans les honneurs obscurs de quelque légion;
Et moi, qui sur le trône ai suivi mes ancêtres,

Moi, fille, femme, sœur et mère de vos maîtres.
Que prétendez-vous donc? Pensez-vous que ma voix
Ait fait un empereur pour m'en imposer trois?
Néron n'est plus enfant. N'est-il pas temps qu'il règne?
Jusqu'à quand voulez-vous que l'empereur vous craigne?
Ne saurait-il rien voir qu'il n'emprunte vos yeux?
Pour se conduire enfin n'a-t-il pas ses aïeux?
Qu'il choisisse, s'il veut, d'Auguste ou de Tibère;
Qu'il imite, s'il peut, Germanicus mon père.
Parmi tant de héros je n'ose me placer;
Mais il est des vertus que je lui puis tracer:
Je puis l'instruire, au moins, combien sa confidence
Entre un sujet et lui doit laisser de distance.

BURRHUS.

Je ne m'étais chargé dans cette occasion
Que d'excuser César d'une seule action;
Mais puisque, sans vouloir que je le justifie,
Vous me rendez garant du reste de sa vie,
Je répondrai, madame, avec la liberté
D'un soldat qui sait mal farder la vérité.
Vous m'avez de César confié la jeunesse;
Je l'avoue, et je dois m'en souvenir sans cesse.
Mais vous avais-je fait serment de le trahir?
D'en faire un empereur qui ne sût qu'obéir?
Non. Ce n'est plus à vous qu'il faut que j'en réponde
Ce n'est plus votre fils, c'est le maître du monde.
J'en dois compte, madame, à l'empire romain,
Qui croit voir son salut ou sa perte en ma main.
Ah! si dans l'ignorance il le fallait instruire,
N'avait-on que Sénèque et moi pour le séduire?
Pourquoi de sa conduite éloigner les flatteurs?
Fallait-il dans l'exil chercher des corrupteurs?
La cour de Claudius, en esclaves fertile,
Pour deux que l'on cherchait, en eût présenté mille
Qui tous auraient brigué l'honneur de l'avilir:
Dans une longue enfance ils l'auraient fait vieillir.
De quoi vous plaignez-vous, madame? On vous révère
Ainsi que par César on jure par sa mère.
L'empereur, il est vrai, ne vient plus chaque jour
Mettre à vos pieds l'empire, et grossir votre cour.
Mais le doit-il, madame? Et sa reconnaissance
Ne peut-elle éclater que dans sa dépendance?
Toujours humble, toujours le timide Néron

N'ose-t-il être Auguste et César que de nom?
Vous le dirai-je enfin? Rome le justifie.
Rome, à trois affranchis si long-temps asservie,
A peine respirant du joug qu'elle a porté,
Du règne de Néron compte sa liberté.
Que dis-je! La vertu semble même renaître.
Tout l'empire n'est plus la dépouille d'un maître.
Le peuple au champ de Mars nomme ses magistrats.
César nomme les chefs sur la foi des soldats.
Thraséas au sénat, Corbulon dans l'armée,
Sont encore innocens, malgré leur renommée.
Les déserts, autrefois peuplés de sénateurs,
Ne sont plus habités que par leurs délateurs.
Qu'importe que César continue à nous croire,
Pourvu que nos conseils ne tendent qu'à sa gloire?
Pourvu que, dans le cours d'un règne florissant,
Rome soit toujours libre, et César tout-puissant?
Mais, madame, Néron suffit pour se conduire.
J'obéis, sans prétendre à l'honneur de l'instruire.
Sur ses aïeux, sans doute, il n'a qu'à se régler:
Pour bien faire, Néron n'a qu'à se ressembler.
Heureux, si ses vertus l'une à l'autre enchaînées
Ramènent tous les ans ses premières années!

AGRIPPINE.

Ainsi, sur l'avenir n'osant vous assurer,
Vous croyez que sans vous Néron va s'égarer.
Mais vous, qui jusqu'ici content de votre ouvrage,
Venez de ses vertus nous rendre témoignage,
Expliquez-nous pourquoi, devenu ravisseur,
Néron de Silanus fait enlever la sœur.
Ne tient-il qu'à marquer de cette ignominie
Le sang de nos aïeux, qui brille dans Junie?
De quoi l'accuse-t-il? et par quel attentat
Devient-elle en un jour criminelle d'état?
Elle qui, sans orgueil jusqu'alors élevée,
N'aurait point vu Néron, s'il ne l'eût enlevée;
Et qui même aurait mis au rang de ses bienfaits
L'heureuse liberté de ne le voir jamais.

BURRHUS.

Je sais que d'aucun crime elle n'est soupçonnée:
Mais jusqu'ici César ne l'a point condamnée,
Madame. Aucun objet ne blesse ici ses yeux:

Elle est dans un palais tout plein de ses aïeux.
Vous savez que les droits qu'elle porte avec elle
Peuvent de son époux faire un prince rebelle;
Que le sang de César ne se doit allier
Qu'à ceux à qui César le veut bien confier;
Et vous-même avoûrez qu'il ne serait pas juste
Qu'on disposât, sans lui, de la nièce d'Auguste.

AGRIPPINE.

Je vous entends. Néron m'apprend par votre voix
Qu'en vain Britannicus s'assure sur mon choix.
En vain, pour détourner ses yeux de sa misère,
J'ai flatté son amour d'un hymen qu'il espère.
A ma confusion, Néron veut faire voir
Qu'Agrippine promet par-delà son pouvoir.
Rome de ma faveur est trop préoccupée;
Il veut par cet affront qu'elle soit détrompée;
Et que tout l'univers apprenne, avec terreur,
A ne confondre plus mon fils et l'empereur.
Il le peut. Toutefois j'ose encore lui dire
Qu'il doit, avant ce coup, affermir son empire;
Et qu'en me réduisant à la nécessité
D'éprouver contre lui ma faible autorité,
Il expose la sienne; et que dans la balance
Mon nom, peut-être, aura plus de poids qu'il ne pense.

BURRHUS.

Quoi, madame, toujours soupçonner son respect!
Ne peut-il faire un pas qui ne vous soit suspect?
L'empereur vous croit-il du parti de Junie?
Avec Britannicus vous croit-il réunie?
Quoi, de vos ennemis devenez-vous l'appui
Pour trouver un prétexte à vous plaindre de lui?
Sur le moindre discours qu'on pourra vous redire,
Serez-vous toujours prête à partager l'empire?
Vous craindrez-vous sans cesse? Et vos embrassemens
Ne se passeront-ils qu'en éclaircissemens?
Ah, quittez d'un censeur la triste diligence!
D'une mère facile affectez l'indulgence.
Souffrez quelques froideurs sans les faire éclater,
Et n'avertissez point la cour de vous quitter.

AGRIPPINE.

Et qui s'honorerait de l'appui d'Agrippine,
Lorsque Néron lui-même annonce ma ruine?

Lorsque

Lorsque de sa présence il semble me bannir;
Quand Burrhus à sa porte ose me retenir.

BURRHUS.

Madame, je vois bien qu'il est temps de me taire,
Et que ma liberté commence à vous déplaire.
La douleur est injuste; et toutes les raisons,
Qui ne la flattent point, aigrissent ses soupçons.
Voici Britannicus. Je lui cède ma place.
Je vous laisse écouter, et plaindre sa disgrâce;
Et peut-être, madame, en accuser les soins
De ceux que l'empereur a consultés le moins.

SCÈNE III.

ALBINE, AGRIPPINE, BRITANNICUS, NARCISSE.

AGRIPPINE.

Ah! prince, où courez-vous? Quelle ardeur inquiète
Parmi vos ennemis en aveugle vous jette?
Que venez-vous chercher?

BRITANNICUS.

Ce que je cherche? Ah, dieux!
Tout ce que j'ai perdu, madame, est en ces lieux.
De mille affreux soldats Junie environnée,
S'est vue en ce palais indignement traînée.
Hélas, de quelle horreur ses timides esprits
A ce nouveau spectacle auront été surpris!
Enfin on me l'enlève. Une loi trop sévère
Va séparer deux cœurs qu'assemblait leur misère.
Sans doute, on ne veut pas que, mêlant nos douleurs,
Nous nous aidions l'un l'autre à porter nos malheurs.

AGRIPPINE.

Il suffit. Comme vous je ressens vos injures:
Mes plaintes ont déjà précédé vos murmures.
Mais je ne prétends point qu'un impuissant courroux
Dégage ma parole, et m'acquitte envers vous.
Je ne m'explique point. Si vous voulez m'entendre,
Suivez-moi chez Pallas où je vais vous attendre.

SCÈNE IV.

BRITANNICUS, NARCISSE.

BRITANNICUS.

La croirai-je, Narcisse? Et dois-je, sur sa foi,
La prendre pour arbitre entre son fils et moi?
Qu'en dis-tu? N'est-ce pas cette même Agrippine
Que mon père épousa jadis pour ma ruine;
Et qui, si je t'en crois, a de ses derniers jours,
Trop lents pour ses desseins, précipité le cours?

NARCISSE.

N'importe. Elle se sent comme vous outragée.
A vous donner Junie elle s'est engagée.
Unissez vos chagrins, liez vos intérêts.
Ce palais retentit en vain de vos regrets.
Tandis qu'on vous verra d'une voix suppliante
Semer ici la plainte, et non pas l'épouvante;
Que vos ressentimens se perdront en discours,
Il n'en faut point douter, vous vous plaindrez toujours.

BRITANNICUS.

Ah! Narcisse, tu sais si de la servitude
Je prétends faire encore une longue habitude;
Tu sais si pour jamais, de ma chute étonné,
Je renonce à l'empire où j'étais destiné!
Mais je suis seul encor. Les amis de mon père
Sont autant d'inconnus que glace ma misère;
Et ma jeunesse même écarte loin de moi
Tous ceux qui, dans le cœur, me réservent leur foi.
Pour moi, depuis un an, qu'un peu d'expérience
M'a donné de mon sort la triste connaissance,
Que vois-je autour de moi? que des amis vendus,
Qui sont de tous mes pas les témoins assidus;
Qui, choisis par Néron pour ce commerce infâme,
Trafiquent avec lui des secrets de mon âme?
Quoi qu'il en soit, Narcisse, on me vend tous les jours;
Il prévoit mes desseins, il entend mes discours:
Comme toi, dans mon cœur il sait ce qui se passe.
Que t'en semble, Narcisse?

NARCISSE.

Ah! quelle âme assez basse..

C'est à vous de choisir des confidens discrets,
Seigneur, et de ne pas prodiguer vos secrets.

BRITANNICUS.

Narcisse, tu dis vrai : mais cette défiance
Est toujours d'un grand cœur la dernière science :
On le trompe long-temps. Mais enfin, je te croi,
Ou plutôt je fais vœu de ne croire que toi.
Mon père, il m'en souvient, m'assura de ton zèle ;
Seul de ses affranchis tu m'es toujours fidèle ;
Tes yeux, sur ma conduite incessamment ouverts,
M'ont sauvé jusqu'ici de mille écueils couverts.
Va donc voir si le bruit de ce nouvel orage
Aura de nos amis excité le courage.
Examine leurs yeux, observe leurs discours ;
Vois si j'en puis attendre un fidèle secours.
Surtout, dans ce palais, remarque, avec adresse,
Avec quel soin Néron fait garder la princesse.
Sache si du péril ses beaux yeux sont remis,
Et si son entretien m'est encore permis.
Cependant de Néron je vais trouver la mère
Chez Pallas, comme toi, l'affranchi de mon père.
Je vais la voir, l'aigrir, la suivre ; et, s'il se peut,
M'engager sous son nom plus loin qu'elle ne veut.

FIN DU PREMIER ACTE.

ACTE SECOND.

SCÈNE I.

BURRHUS, NÉRON, NARCISSE; GARDES dans le fond.

NÉRON.

N'EN doutez point, Burrhus, malgré ses injustices,
C'est ma mère, et je veux ignorer ses caprices.
Mais je ne prétends plus ignorer ni souffrir
Le ministre insolent qui les ose nourrir.
Pallas de ses conseils empoisonne ma mère;
Il séduit chaque jour Britannicus mon frère;
Ils l'écoutent lui seul; et qui suivrait leurs pas,
Les trouverait peut-être assemblés chez Pallas.
C'en est trop. De tous deux il faut que je l'écarte.
Pour la dernière fois qu'il s'éloigne, qu'il parte;
Je le veux, je l'ordonne; et que la fin du jour
Ne le retrouve pas dans Rome, ou dans ma cour.
Allez, cet ordre importe au salut de l'empire.

(Burrhus sort.)

Vous, Narcisse, approchez.

(aux gardes.)

Et vous, qu'on se retire.

SCÈNE II.

NÉRON, NARCISSE.

NARCISSE.

Grâces aux dieux, seigneur, Junie entre vos mains
Vous assure aujourd'hui du reste des Romains.
Vos ennemis, déchus de leur vaine espérance,
Sont allés chez Pallas pleurer leur impuissance.
Mais que vois-je? Vous même inquiet, étonné,
Plus que Britannicus paraissez consterné.
Que présage à mes yeux cette tristesse obscure,
Et ces sombres regards errans à l'aventure?
Tout vous rit. La fortune obéit à vos vœux.

NÉRON.

Narcisse, c'en est fait : Néron est amoureux.

NARCISSE.

Vous ?

NÉRON.

Depuis un moment ; mais pour toute ma vie.
J'aime, que dis-je aimer ? j'idolâtre Junie.

NARCISSE.

Vous l'aimez ?

NÉRON.

Excité d'un désir curieux,
Cette nuit je l'ai vu arriver en ces lieux,
Triste, levant au ciel ses yeux mouillés de larmes,
Qui brillaient au travers des flambeaux et des armes ;
Belle sans ornement, dans le simple appareil
D'une beauté qu'on vient d'arracher au sommeil.
Que veux-tu ? Je ne sais si cette négligence,
Les ombres, les flambeaux, les cris et le silence,
Et le farouche aspect de ses fiers ravisseurs,
Relevaient de ses yeux les timides douceurs :
Quoi qu'il en soit, ravi d'une si belle vue,
J'ai voulu lui parler et ma voix s'est perdue ;
Immobile, saisi d'un long étonnement,
Je l'ai laissé passer dans son appartement.
J'ai passé dans le mien. C'est là que, solitaire,
De son image en vain j'ai voulu me distraire.
Trop présente à mes yeux, je croyais lui parler.
J'aimais jusqu'à ses pleurs que je faisais couler.
Quelquefois, mais trop tard, je lui demandais grâce.
J'employais les soupirs, et même la menace.
Voilà comme occupé de mon nouvel amour,
Mes yeux, sans se fermer, ont attendu le jour.
Mais je m'en fais peut-être une trop belle image :
Elle m'est apparue avec trop d'avantage ;
Narcisse, qu'en dis-tu ?

NARCISSE.

Quoi ! seigneur, croira-t-on
Qu'elle ait pu si long-temps se cacher à Néron ?

NÉRON.

Tu le sais bien, Narcisse. Et, soit que sa colère
M'imputât le malheur qui lui ravit son frère ;

Soit que son cœur, jaloux d'une austère fierté,
Enviât à nos yeux sa naissante beauté;
Fidèle à sa douleur, et dans l'ombre enfermée,
Elle se dérobait même à sa renommée:
Et c'est cette vertu, si nouvelle à la cour,
Dont la persévérance irrite mon amour.
Quoi, Narcisse, tandis qu'il n'est point de Romaine
Que mon amour n'honore, et ne rende plus vaine;
Qui, dès qu'à ses regards elle ose se fier,
Sur le cœur de César ne les vienne essayer;
Seule, dans son palais, la modeste Junie
Regarde leurs honneurs comme une ignominie,
Fuit, et ne daigne pas peut-être s'informer
Si César est aimable, ou bien s'il sait aimer?
Dis-moi, Britannicus l'aime-t-il?

NARCISSE.

Quoi, s'il l'aime,
Seigneur!

NÉRON

Si jeune encor, se connaît-il lui-même?
D'un regard enchanteur connaît-il le poison?

NARCISSE.

Seigneur, l'amour toujours n'attend pas la raison.
N'en doutez point, il l'aime. Instruits par tant de charmes,
Ses yeux sont déjà faits à l'usage des larmes.
A ses moindres désirs il sait s'accommoder;
Et peut-être déjà sait-il persuader.

NÉRON.

Que dis-tu? Sur son cœur il aurait quelque empire!

NARCISSE.

Je ne sais. Mais, seigneur, ce que je puis vous dire,
Je l'ai vu quelquefois s'arracher de ces lieux,
Le cœur plein d'un courroux qu'il cachait à vos yeux;
D'une cour qui le fuit pleurant l'ingratitude;
Las de votre grandeur et de sa servitude;
Entre l'impatience et la crainte flottant;
Il allait voir Junie, et revenait content.

NÉRON.

D'autant plus malheureux qu'il aura su lui plaire,
Narcisse, il doit plutôt souhaiter sa colère.
Néron impunément ne sera pas jaloux.

NARCISSE.

Vous? Et de quoi, seigneur, vous inquiétez-vous?
Junie a pu le plaindre et partager ses peines,
Elle n'a vu couler de larmes que les siennes;
Mais aujourd'hui, seigneur, que ses yeux dessillés,
Regardant de plus près l'éclat dont vous brillez,
Verront autour de vous les rois sans diadème,
Inconnus dans la foule, et son amant lui-même,
Attachés sur vos yeux, s'honorer d'un regard
Que vous aurez sur eux fait tomber au hasard;
Quand elle vous verra, de ce degré de gloire,
Venir, en soupirant, avouer sa victoire,
Maître, n'en doutez point, d'un cœur déjà charmé
Commandez qu'on vous aime, et vous serez aimé.

NÉRON.

A combien de chagrins il faut que je m'apprête!
Que d'importunités!

NARCISSE.

Quoi donc? Qui vous arrête,
Seigneur?

NÉRON.

Tout. Octavie, Agrippine, Burrhus,
Sénèque, Rome entière, et trois ans de vertus.
Non que pour Octavie un reste de tendresse
M'attache à son hymen et plaigne sa jeunesse:
Mes yeux, depuis long-temps fatigués de ses soins,
Rarement de ses pleurs daignent être témoins.
Trop heureux, si bientôt la faveur d'un divorce
Me soulageait d'un joug qu'on m'impose par force!
Le Ciel même en secret semble la condamner.
Ses vœux, depuis quatre ans, ont beau l'importuner;
Les dieux ne montrent point que sa vertu les touche.
D'aucun gage, Narcisse, ils n'honorent sa couche;
L'empire vainement demande un héritier.

NARCISSE.

Que tardez-vous, seigneur, à la répudier?
L'empire, votre cœur, tout condamne Octavie.
Auguste, votre aïeul, soupirait pour Livie;
Par un double divorce ils s'unirent tous deux;
Et vous devez l'empire à ce divorce heureux.
Tibère, que l'hymen plaça dans sa famille,

Osa bien à ses yeux répudier sa fille.
Vous seul, jusques ici contraire à vos désirs,
N'osez par un divorce assurer vos plaisirs.

NÉRON.

Et ne connais-tu pas l'implacable Agrippine?
Mon amour inquiet déjà se l'imagine
Qui m'amène Octavie, et d'un œil enflammé
Atteste les saints droits d'un nœud qu'elle a formé;
Et, portant à mon cœur des atteintes plus rudes,
Me fait un long récit de mes ingratitudes.
De quel front soutenir ce fâcheux entretien?

NARCISSE.

N'êtes-vous pas, seigneur, votre maître et le sien?
Vous verrons-nous toujours trembler sous sa tutelle?
Vivez, régnez pour vous. C'est trop régner pour elle.
Craignez-vous? Mais, seigneur, vous ne la craignez pas.
Vous venez de bannir le superbe Pallas,
Pallas, dont vous savez qu'elle soutient l'audace.

NÉRON.

Éloigné de ses yeux, j'ordonne, je menace,
J'écoute vos conseils, j'ose les approuver;
Je m'excite contre elle, et tâche à la braver;
Mais, je t'expose ici mon âme toute nue,
Sitôt que mon malheur me ramène à sa vue,
Soit que je n'ose encor démentir le pouvoir
De ces yeux où j'ai lu si long-temps mon devoir;
Soit qu'à tant de bienfaits ma mémoire fidèle
Lui soumette en secret tout ce que je tiens d'elle;
Mais enfin mes efforts ne me servent de rien:
Mon génie étonné tremble devant le sien.
Et c'est pour m'affranchir de cette dépendance,
Que je la fuis partout, que même je l'offense;
Et que de temps en temps j'irrite ses ennuis,
Afin qu'elle m'évite autant que je la fuis.
Mais je t'arrête trop, retire-toi, Narcisse;
Britannicus pourrait t'accuser d'artifice.

NARCISSE.

Non, non, Britannicus s'abandonne à ma foi.
Par son ordre, seigneur, il croit que je vous voi;
Que je m'informe ici de tout ce qui le touche,
Et veut de vos secrets être instruit par ma bouche.

Impatient,

Impatient surtout de revoir ses amours,
Il attend de mes soins ce fidèle secours.

NÉRON.

J'y consens; porte-lui cette douce nouvelle :
Il la verra.

NARCISSE.

Seigneur, bannissez-le loin d'elle.

NÉRON.

J'ai mes raisons, Narcisse; et tu peux concevoir
Que je lui vendrai cher le plaisir de la voir.
Cependant vante-lui ton heureux stratagème;
Dis-lui qu'en sa faveur on me trompe moi-même;
Qu'il la voit sans mon ordre. On ouvre; la voici.
Va retrouver ton maître, et me l'amène ici.

SCÈNE III.

JUNIE, NÉRON.

NÉRON.

Vous vous troublez, madame, et changez de visage;
Lisez-vous dans mes yeux quelque triste présage?

JUNIE.

Seigneur, je ne vous puis déguiser mon erreur;
J'allais voir Octavie, et non pas l'empereur.

NÉRON.

Je le sais bien, madame; et n'ai pu, sans envie,
Apprendre vos bontés pour l'heureuse Octavie.

JUNIE.

Vous, seigneur?

NÉRON.

Pensez-vous, madame, qu'en ces lieux,
Seule, pour vous connaître, Octavie ait des yeux?

JUNIE.

Et quel autre, seigneur, voulez-vous que j'implore?
A qui demanderai-je un crime que j'ignore?
Vous qui le punissez, vous ne l'ignorez pas.
De grâce, apprenez-moi, seigneur, mes attentats.

NÉRON.

Quoi, madame? est-ce donc une légère offense

De m'avoir si long-temps caché votre présence?
Ces trésors, dont le ciel voulut vous embellir,
Les avez-vous reçus pour les ensevelir?
L'heureux Britannicus verra-t-il, sans ses armes,
Croître, loin de nos yeux, son amour, et vos charmes?
Pourquoi, de cette gloire exclus jusqu'à ce jour,
M'avez-vous, sans pitié, relégué dans ma cour?
On dit plus. Vous souffrez, sans en être offensée,
Qu'il vous ose, madame, expliquer sa pensée;
Car je ne croirai point que, sans me consulter,
La sévère Junie ait voulu le flatter,
Ni qu'elle ait consenti d'aimer et d'être aimée,
Sans que j'en sois instruit que par la renommée.

JUNIE.

Je ne vous nîrai point, seigneur, que ses soupirs
M'ont daigné quelquefois expliquer ses désirs.
Il n'a point détourné ses regards d'une fille,
Seul reste du débris d'une illustre famille.
Peut-être il se souvient qu'en un temps plus heureux,
Son père me nomma pour l'objet de ses vœux.
Il m'aime, il obéit à l'empereur son père;
Et j'ose dire encore, à vous, à votre mère:
Vos désirs sont toujours si conformes aux siens....

NÉRON.

Ma mère a ses desseins, madame, et j'ai les miens.
Ne parlons plus ici de Claude et d'Agrippine:
Ce n'est point par leur choix que je me détermine.
C'est à moi seul, madame, à répondre de vous;
Et je veux, de ma main, vous choisir un époux.

JUNIE

Ah! seigneur, songez-vous que toute autre alliance
Fera honte aux Césars auteurs de ma naissance?

NÉRON.

Non, madame, l'époux dont je vous entretiens,
Peut sans honte, assembler vos aïeux et les siens:
Vous pouvez, sans rougir, consentir à sa flamme.

JUNIE.

Et quel est donc, seigneur, cet époux?

NÉRON.

Moi, madame.

JUNIE.

Vous ?

NÉRON.

Je vous nommerais, madame, un autre nom
Si j'en savais quelqu'autre au-dessus de Néron.
Oui, pour vous faire un choix où vous puissiez souscrire,
J'ai parcouru des yeux la cour, Rome, et l'empire.
Plus j'ai cherché, madame, et plus je cherche encor
En quelles mains je dois confier ce trésor,
Plus je vois que César, digne seul de vous plaire,
En doit être lui seul l'heureux dépositaire;
Et ne peut dignement vous confier qu'aux mains
A qui Rome a commis l'empire des humains.
Vous même, consultez vos premières années;
Claudius à son fils les avait destinées;
Mais c'était en un temps où de l'empire entier
Il croyait, quelque jour, le nommer l'héritier.
Les dieux ont prononcé. Loin de leur contredire,
C'est à vous de passer du côté de l'empire.
En vain de ce présent ils m'auraient honoré,
Si votre cœur devait en être séparé;
Si tant de soins ne sont adoucis par vos charmes;
Si, tandis que je donne aux veilles, aux alarmes,
Mes jours toujours à plaindre, et toujours enviés,
Je ne vais quelquefois soupirer à vos pieds.
Qu'Octavie à vos yeux ne fasse point d'ombrage;
Rome, aussi-bien que moi vous donne son suffrage,
Répudie Octavie et me fait dénouer
Un hymen que le ciel ne veut point avouer.
Songez-y donc, madame, et pesez en vous-même
Ce choix digne des soins d'un prince qui vous aime,
Digne de vos beaux yeux trop long-temps captivés,
Digne de l'univers à qui vous vous devez.

JUNIE.

Seigneur, avec raison je demeure étonnée.
Je me vois, dans le cours d'une même journée,
Comme une criminelle amenée en ces lieux;
Et, lorsqu'avec frayeur je parais à vos yeux,
Que sur mon innocence à peine je me fie,
Vous m'offrez, tout d'un coup, la place d'Octavie!
J'ose dire pourtant que je n'ai mérité
Ni cet excès d'honneur, ni cette indignité;
Et pouvez-vous, seigneur, souhaiter qu'une fille

Qui vit, presque en naissant, éteindre sa famille ;
Qui, dans l'obscurité nourrissant sa douleur,
S'est fait une vertu conforme à son malheur,
Passe subitement, de cette nuit profonde,
Dans un rang qui l'expose aux yeux de tout le monde,
Dont je n'ai pu de loin soutenir la clarté,
Et dont une autre, enfin, remplit la majesté.

NÉRON.

Je vous ai déja dit que je la répudie.
Ayez moins de frayeur, ou moins de modestie.
N'accusez point ici mon choix d'aveuglement ;
Je vous réponds de vous, consentez seulement.
Du sang dont vous sortez rappelez la mémoire,
Et ne préférez point, à la solide gloire
Des honneurs dont César prétend vous revêtir,
La gloire d'un refus sujet au repentir.

JUNIE.

Le ciel connaît, seigneur, le fond de ma pensée ;
Je ne me flatte point d'une gloire insensée :
Je sais de vos présens mesurer la grandeur.
Mais plus ce rang sur moi répandrait de splendeur,
Plus il me ferait honte, et mettrait en lumière
Le crime d'en avoir dépouillé l'héritière.

NÉRON.

C'est de ses intérêts prendre beaucoup de soin,
Madame ; et l'amitié ne peut aller plus loin.
Mais ne nous flattons point, et laissons le mystère.
La sœur vous touche ici beaucoup moins que le frère ;
Et pour Britannicus....

JUNIE.

Il a su me toucher,
Seigneur, et je n'ai point prétendu m'en cacher.
Cette sincérité, sans doute, est peu discrète ;
Mais toujours de mon cœur ma bouche est l'interprète.
Absente de la cour, je n'ai pas dû penser,
Seigneur, qu'en l'art de feindre il fallût m'exercer.
J'aime Britannicus ; je lui fus destinée
Quand l'empire devait suivre son hyménée.
Mais ces mêmes malheurs qui l'en ont écarté,
Ses honneurs abolis, son palais déserté,
La fuite d'une cour que sa chute a bannie,

Sont autant de liens qui retiennent Junie.
Tout ce que vous voyez conspire à vos désirs;
Vos jours, toujours sereins, coulent dans les plaisirs;
L'empire qu'est pour vous l'inépuisable source;
Ou, si quelque chagrin en interrompt la course,
Tout l'univers, soigneux de les entretenir,
S'empresse à l'effacer de votre souvenir.
Britannicus est seul. Quelque ennui qui le presse,
Il ne voit, dans son sort, que moi qui s'intéresse;
Et n'a pour tout plaisir, seigneur, que quelques pleurs
Qui lui font quelquefois oublier ses malheurs.

NÉRON.

Et ce sont ces plaisirs et ces pleurs que j'envie;
Que tout autre que lui me paîrait de sa vie;
Mais je garde à ce prince un traitement plus doux.
Madame, il va bientôt paraître devant vous.

JUNIE.

Ah! seigneur, vos vertus m'ont toujours rassurée

NÉRON.

Je pouvais de ces lieux lui défendre l'entrée;
Mais, madame, je veux prévenir le danger
Où son ressentiment le pourrait engager.
Je ne veux point le perdre; il vaut mieux que lui-même
Entende son arrêt de la bouche qu'il aime.
Si ses jours vous sont chers, éloignez-le de vous,
Sans qu'il ait aucun lieu de me croire jaloux;
De son bannissement prenez sur vous l'offense;
Et, soit par vos discours, soit par votre silence,
Du moins, par vos froideurs, faites-lui concevoir
Qu'il doit porter ailleurs ses vœux et son espoir.

JUNIE.

Moi, que je lui prononce un arrêt si sévère!
Ma bouche mille fois lui jura le contraire.
Quand même jusque-là je pourrais me trahir,
Mes yeux lui défendront, seigneur, de m'obéir.

NÉRON.

Caché près de ces lieux, je vous verrai, madame.
Renfermez votre amour dans le fond de votre âme;
Vous n'aurez point pour moi de langages secrets:
J'entendrai des regards que vous croirez muets;

Et sa perte sera l'infaillible salaire
D'un geste, ou d'un soupir échappé pour lui plaire.

JUNIE.

Hélas! si j'ose encor former quelques souhaits,
Seigneur, permettez-moi de ne le voir jamais.

SCÈNE IV.

JUNIE, *NARCISSE*, NÉRON.

NARCISSE.

Britannicus, seigneur, demande la princesse;
Il approche.

NÉRON.

Qu'il vienne.

JUNIE.

Ah, seigneur!

NÉRON.

Je vous laisse
Sa fortune dépend de vous plus que de moi.
Madame, en le voyant, songez que je vous voi.

SCÈNE V.

JUNIE, NARCISSE.

JUNIE.

Ah! cher Narcisse, cours au-devant de ton maître,
Dis-lui...

SCÈNE VI.

NARCISSE, BRITANNICUS, JUNIE.

JUNIE.

Je suis perdue, et je le vois paraître.

BRITANNICUS.

Madame, quel bonheur me rapproche de vous?
Quoi, je puis donc jouir d'un entretien si doux!
Mais parmi ce plaisir, quel chagrin vous élève?
Hélas! puis-je espérer de vous revoir encore?
Faut-il que je dérobe, avec mille détours,
Un bonheur que vos yeux m'accordaient tous les jours?
Quelle nuit! Quel réveil! Vos pleurs, votre présence,
N'ont point de ces cruels désarmé l'insolence?

Que faisait votre amant? Quel démon envieux
M'a refusé l'honneur de mourir à vos yeux?
Hélas! dans la fureur dont vous étiez atteinte,
M'avez-vous, en secret, adressé quelque plainte?
Ma princesse, avez-vous daigné me souhaiter?
Songiez-vous aux douleurs que m'alliez coûter?
Vous ne me dites rien? Quel accueil! quelle glace!
Est-ce ainsi que vos yeux consolent ma disgrâce?
Parlez. Nous sommes seuls. Notre ennemi trompé,
Tandis que je vous parle, est ailleurs occupé.
Ménageons les momens de cette heureuse absence.

JUNIE.

Vous êtes en des lieux tout pleins de sa puissance:
Ces murs mêmes, seigneur, peuvent avoir des yeux;
Et jamais l'empereur n'est absent de ces lieux.

BRITANNICUS.

Et depuis quand, madame, êtes-vous si craintive?
Quoi, déjà votre amour souffre qu'on le captive?
Qu'est devenu ce cœur qui me jurait toujours
De faire à Néron même envier nos amours?
Mais bannissez, madame, une inutile crainte:
La foi dans tous les cœurs n'est pas encore éteinte;
Chacun semble des yeux approuver mon courroux;
La mère de Néron se déclare pour nous.
Rome, de sa conduite elle-même offensée....

JUNIE.

Ah! seigneur, vous parlez contre votre pensée.
Vous-même, vous m'avez avoué mille fois
Que Rome le louait d'une commune voix:
Toujours à sa vertu vous rendiez quelque hommage.
Sans doute la douleur vous dicte ce langage.

BRITANNICUS.

Ce discours me surprend, il le faut avouer.
Je ne vous cherchais pas pour l'entendre louer.
Quoi! pour vous confier la douleur qui m'accable,
A peine je dérobe un moment favorable;
Et ce moment si cher, madame, est consumé
A louer l'ennemi dont je suis opprimé!
Qui vous rend à vous-même en un jour si contraire?
Quoi, même vos regards ont appris à se taire?
Que vois-je? Vous craignez de rencontrer mes yeux?
Néron vous plairait-il? Vous serais-je odieux?

Ah ! si je le croyais.... Au nom des dieux, madame,
Éclaircissez le trouble où vous jetez mon âme.
Parlez. Ne suis-je plus dans votre souvenir ?

JUNIE.

Retirez-vous, seigneur ; l'empereur va venir.

BRITANNICUS.

Après ce coup, Narcisse, à quoi dois-je m'attendre ?
(il sort.)

SCÈNE VII.

NARCISSE, NÉRON, JUNIE.

NÉRON.

Madame....

JUNIE.

Non, seigneur, je ne puis rien entendre.
Vous êtes obéi. Laissez couler du moins
Des larmes dont ses yeux ne seront pas témoins.

SCÈNE VIII.

NARCISSE, NÉRON.

NÉRON.

Hé bien, de leur amour, tu vois la violence,
Narcisse : elle a paru jusque dans son silence ;
Elle aime mon rival, je ne puis l'ignorer.
Mais je mettrai ma joie à le désespérer.
Je me fais de sa peine une image charmante ;
Et je l'ai vu douter du cœur de son amante.
Je la suis. Mon rival t'attend pour éclater.
Par de nouveaux soupçons, va, cours le tourmenter ;
Et, tandis qu'à mes yeux on le pleure, on l'adore,
Fais-lui payer bien cher un bonheur qu'il ignore.

SCÈNE IX.

NARCISSE seul.

La fortune t'appelle une seconde fois,
Narcisse ; voudrais-tu résister à sa voix ?
Suivons jusques au bout ses ordres favorables ;
Et, pour nous rendre heureux, perdons les misérables.

FIN DU SECOND ACTE.

ACTE

ACTE TROISIÈME.

SCÈNE I.

NÉRON, BURRHUS.

BURRHUS.

PALLAS obéira, seigneur.

NÉRON.

Et de quel œil
Ma mère a-t-elle vu confondre son orgueil?

BURRHUS.

Ne doutez point, seigneur, que ce coup ne la frappe;
Qu'en reproches bientôt sa douleur ne s'échappe.
Ses transports, dès long-temps, commencent d'éclater;
A d'inutiles cris puissent-ils s'arrêter?

NÉRON.

Quoi! de quelque dessein la croyez-vous capable?

BURRHUS.

Agrippine, seigneur, est toujours redoutable.
Rome et tous vos soldats révèrent ses aïeux;
Germanicus son père est présent à leurs yeux.
Elle sait son pouvoir; vous savez son courage:
Et ce qui me la fait redouter davantage,
C'est que vous appuyez vous-même son courroux;
Et que vous lui donnez des armes contre vous.

NÉRON.

Moi, Burrhus?

BURRHUS.

Cet amour, seigneur, qui vous possède...

NÉRON.

Je vous entends, Burrhus: le mal est sans remède.
Mon cœur s'en est plus dit que vous ne m'en direz.
Il faut que j'aime enfin.

BURRHUS.

Vous vous le figurez,

Seigneur; et, satisfait de quelque résistance,
Vous redoutez un mal faible dans sa naissance.
Mais si dans son devoir votre cœur affermi
Voulait ne point s'entendre avec son ennemi;
Si de vos premiers ans vous consultiez la gloire;
Si vous daigniez, seigneur, rappeler la mémoire
Des vertus d'Octavie indigne de ce prix,
Et de son chaste amour vainqueur de vos mépris;
Surtout, si, de Junie évitant la présence,
Vous condamniez vos yeux à quelques jours d'absence;
Croyez-moi, quelque amour qui semble vous charmer,
On n'aime point, seigneur, si l'on ne veut aimer.

NÉRON.

Je vous croirai, Burrhus, lorsque dans les alarmes,
Il faudra soutenir la gloire de nos armes;
Ou, lorsque plus tranquille, assis dans le sénat,
Il faudra décider du destin de l'état,
Je m'en reposerai sur votre expérience.
Mais, croyez-moi, l'amour est une autre science,
Burrhus; et je ferais quelque difficulté
D'abaisser jusque-là votre sévérité.
Adieu. Je souffre trop éloigné de Junie.

SCENE II.

BURRHUS seul.

Enfin, Burrhus, Néron découvre son génie.
Cette férocité, que tu croyais fléchir,
De tes faibles liens est prête à s'affranchir.
En quels excès peut-être elle va se répandre!
O dieux! en ce malheur quel conseil dois-je prendre?
Sénèque, dont les soins me devraient soulager,
Occupé loin de Rome, ignore ce danger.
Mais quoi? Si, d'Agrippine excitant la tendresse,
Je pouvais....

SCÈNE III.

ALBINE, AGRIPPINE, BURRHUS.

BURRHUS.

La voici, mon bonheur me l'adresse.

AGRIPPINE.

Hé bien, je me trompais, Burrhus, dans mes soupçons;
Et vous vous signalez par d'illustres leçons.
On exile Pallas, dont le crime, peut-être,
Est d'avoir à l'empire élevé votre maître.
Vous le savez trop bien. Jamais, sans ses avis,
Claude, qu'il gouvernait, n'eût adopté mon fils.
Que dis-je? A son épouse on donne une rivale;
On affranchit Néron de la foi conjugale :
Digne emploi d'un ministre, ennemi des flatteurs,
Choisi pour mettre un frein à ses jeunes ardeurs,
De les flatter lui-même, et nourrir dans son âme
Le mépris de sa mère, et l'oubli de sa femme!

BURRHUS.

Madame, jusqu'ici c'est trop tôt m'accuser.
L'empereur n'a rien fait qu'on ne puisse excuser.
N'imputez qu'à Pallas un exil nécessaire :
Son orgueil, dès long-temps, exigeait ce salaire;
Et l'empereur ne fait qu'accomplir, à regret,
Ce que toute la cour demandait en secret.
Le reste est un malheur qui n'est point sans ressource.
Des larmes d'Octavie on peut tarir la source.
Mais calmez vos transports. Par un chemin plus doux,
Vous lui pourrez plutôt ramener son époux.
Les menaces, les cris le rendront plus farouche.

AGRIPPINE.

Ah! l'on s'efforce en vain de me fermer la bouche.
Je vois que mon silence irrite vos dédains;
Et c'est trop respecter l'ouvrage de mes mains.
Pallas n'emporte pas tout l'appui d'Agrippine;
Le ciel m'en laisse assez pour venger ma ruine.
Le fils de Claudius commence à ressentir
Des crimes, dont je n'ai que le seul repentir.
J'irai, n'en doutez point, le montrer à l'armée;
Plaindre aux yeux des soldats son enfance opprimée;
Leur faire, à mon exemple, expier leur erreur.
On verra d'un côté le fils d'un empereur
Redemandant la foi jurée à sa famille,
Et de Germanicus on entendra la fille;
De l'autre, l'on verra le fils d'Ænobarbus,
Appuyé de Sénèque, et du tribun Burrhus,
Qui tous deux, de l'exil rappelés par moi-même,

Partagent à mes yeux l'autorité suprême.
De nos crimes communs je veux qu'on soit instruit:
On saura les chemins par où je l'ai conduit.
Pour rendre sa puissance et la vôtre odieuses,
J'avouerai les rumeurs les plus injurieuses.
Je confesserai tout, exils, assassinats,
Poison même....

BURRHUS.

Madame, ils ne vous croiront pas.
Ils sauront récuser l'injuste stratagème
D'un témoin irrité qui s'accuse lui-même.
Pour moi, qui le premier secondai vos desseins,
Qui fis même jurer l'armée entre ses mains,
Je ne me repens point de ce zèle sincère:
Madame, c'est un fils qui succède à son père.
En adoptant Néron, Claudius, par son choix,
De son fils et du vôtre a confondu les droits.
Rome l'a pu choisir. Ainsi, sans être injuste,
Elle choisit Tibère adopté par Auguste;
Et le jeune Agrippa, de son sang descendu,
Se vit exclu d'un rang vainement prétendu.
Sur tant de fondemens sa puissance établie,
Par vous-même aujourd'hui ne peut être affaiblie;
Et, s'il m'écoute encor, madame, sa bonté
Vous en fera bientôt perdre la volonté.
J'ai commencé, je vais poursuivre mon ouvrage.

SCENE IV.

AGRIPPINE, ALBINE.

ALBINE

Dans quel emportement la douleur vous engage,
Madame! L'empereur puisse-t-il l'ignorer!

AGRIPPINE

Ah! lui-même à mes yeux puisse-t-il se montrer!

ALBINE.

Madame, au nom des dieux, cachez votre colère.
Quoi, pour les intérêts de la sœur ou du frère,
Faut-il sacrifier le repos de vos jours?
Contraindrez-vous César jusque dans ses amours?

AGRIPPINE.

Quoi, tu ne vois donc pas jusqu'où l'on me ravale,
Albine? C'est à moi qu'on donne une rivale.
Bientôt, si je ne romps ce funeste lien,
Ma place est occupée, et je ne suis plus rien.
Jusqu'ici d'un vain titre Octavie honorée,
Inutile à la cour, en était ignorée.
Les grâces, les honneurs par moi seule versés,
M'attiraient des mortels les vœux intéressés.
Une autre de César a surpris la tendresse;
Elle aura le pouvoir d'épouse et de maîtresse.
Le fruit de tant de soins, la pompe des Césars,
Tout deviendra le prix d'un seul de ses regards.
Que dis-je? L'on m'évite, et déja délaissée...
Ah! je ne puis, Albine, en souffrir la pensée!
Quand je devrais du ciel hâter l'arrêt fatal,
Néron, l'ingrat Néron....

SCÈNE V.

ALBINE, AGRIPPINE, BRITANNICUS, NARCISSE.

AGRIPPINE.

Mais voici son rival.

BRITANNICUS.

Nos ennemis communs ne sont pas invincibles,
Madame; nos malheurs trouvent des cœurs sensibles.
Vos amis et les miens, jusqu'alors si secrets,
Tandis que nous perdions le temps en vains regrets,
Animés du courroux qu'allume l'injustice,
Viennent de confier leur douleur à Narcisse.
Néron n'est pas encor tranquille possesseur
De l'ingrate qu'il aime au mépris de ma sœur.
Si vous êtes toujours sensible à son injure,
On peut dans son devoir ramener le parjure.
La moitié du sénat s'intéresse pour nous;
Sylla, Pison, Plautus....

AGRIPPINE.

Prince, que dites-vous?
Sylla, Pison, Plautus, les chefs de la noblesse!

BRITANNICUS.

Madame, je vois bien que ce discours vous blesse;

Et que votre courroux, tremblant, irrésolu,
Craint déjà d'obtenir tout ce qu'il a voulu.
Non, vous avez trop bien établi ma disgrâce;
D'aucun ami pour moi ne redoutez l'audace :
Il ne m'en reste plus; et vos soins trop prudens
Les ont tous écartés ou séduits dès long-temps.

AGRIPPINE.

Seigneur, à vos soupçons donnez moins de créance;
Votre salut dépend de notre intelligence.
J'ai promis, il suffit. Malgré vos ennemis,
Je ne révoque rien de ce que j'ai promis.
Le coupable Néron fuit en vain ma colère.
Tôt ou tard il faudra qu'il entende sa mère.
J'essaîrai tour à tour la force et la douceur;
Ou moi-même, avec moi conduisant votre sœur,
J'irai semer partout ma crainte et ses alarmes,
Et ranger tous les cœurs du parti de ses larmes.
Adieu. J'assiégerai Néron de toutes parts.
Vous, si vous m'en croyez, évitez ses regards.

SCÈNE VI.

BRITANNICUS, NARCISSE.

BRITANNICUS.

Ne m'as-tu pas flatté d'une fausse espérance?
Puis-je sur ton récit fonder quelque assurance,
Narcisse?

NARCISSE.

Oui. Mais, seigneur, ce n'est pas en ces lieux,
Qu'il faut développer ce mystère à vos yeux.
Sortons... Qu'attendez-vous?

BRITANNICUS.

Ce que j'attends, Narcisse?
Hélas!

NARCISSE.

Expliquez-vous.

BRITANNICUS.

Si, par ton artifice,
Je pouvais revoir....

NARCISSE.

Qui ?

BRITANNICUS.

J'en rougis. Mais, enfin,
D'un cœur moins agité j'attendrais mon destin.

NARCISSE.

Après tous mes discours vous la croyez fidelle ?

BRITANNICUS.

Non ; je la crois, Narcisse, ingrate, criminelle,
Digne de mon courroux. Mais je sens, malgré moi,
Que je ne le crois pas autant que je le doi.
Dans ses égaremens mon cœur opiniâtre,
Lui prête des raisons, l'excuse, l'idolâtre.
Je voudrais vaincre enfin mon incrédulité :
Je la voudrais haïr avec tranquillité.
Et qui croira qu'un cœur, si grand en apparence,
D'une infidèle cour ennemi dès l'enfance,
Renonce à tant de gloire ; et, dès le premier jour,
Trame une perfidie inouïe à la cour ?

NARCISSE.

Et qui sait si l'ingrate, en sa longue retraite,
N'a point de l'empereur médité la défaite ?
Trop sûre que ses yeux ne pouvaient se cacher,
Peut-être elle fuyait pour se faire chercher ;
Pour exciter Néron par la gloire pénible
De vaincre une fierté jusqu'alors invincible.

BRITANNICUS.

Je ne la puis donc voir ?

NARCISSE.

Seigneur, en ce moment,
Elle reçoit les vœux de son nouvel amant.

BRITANNICUS.

Hé bien, Narcisse, allons. Mais que vois-je ? C'est elle.

NARCISSE, à part.

Ah, dieux ! A l'empereur portons cette nouvelle.

SCÈNE VII.

JUNIE, BRITANNICUS.

JUNIE.

Retirez-vous, seigneur, et fuyez un courroux
Que ma persévérance allume contre vous.
Néron est irrité. Je me suis échappée,
Tandis qu'à l'arrêter sa mère est occupée.
Adieu. Réservez-vous, sans blesser mon amour,
Au plaisir de me voir justifier un jour.
Votre image sans cesse est présente à mon âme.
Rien ne l'en peut bannir.

BRITANNICUS.

Je vous entends, madame.
Vous voulez que ma fuite assure vos désirs;
Que je laisse un champ libre à vos nouveaux soupirs.
Sans doute, en me voyant, une pudeur secrète
Ne vous laisse goûter qu'une joie inquiète.
Hé bien! il faut partir.

JUNIE.

Seigneur, sans m'imputer....

BRITANNICUS.

Ah! vous deviez du moins plus long-temps disputer.
Je ne murmure point qu'une amitié commune
Se range du parti que flatte la fortune;
Que l'éclat d'un empire ait pu vous éblouir;
Qu'aux dépens de ma sœur vous en vouliez jouir.
Mais que de ces grandeurs comme une autre occupée,
Vous m'en ayez paru si long-temps détrompée;
Non, je l'avoue encor, mon cœur désespéré
Contre ce seul malheur n'était point préparé.
J'ai vu sur ma ruine élever l'injustice;
De mes persécuteurs j'ai vu le ciel complice:
Tant d'horreurs n'avaient point épuisé son courroux.
Madame; il me restait d'être oublié de vous.

JUNIE.

Dans un temps plus heureux, ma juste impatience
Vous ferait repentir de votre défiance.
Mais Néron vous menace. En ce pressant danger,

Seigneur,

Seigneur, j'ai d'autres soins que de vous affliger.
Allez, rassurez-vous, et cessez de vous plaindre;
Néron nous écoutait, et m'ordonnait de feindre.

BRITANNICUS.

Quoi! le cruel....

JUNIE.

Témoin de tout notre entretien,
D'un visage sévère examinait le mien,
Prêt à faire sur vous éclater la vengeance
D'un geste confident de notre intelligence.

BRITANNICUS.

Néron nous écoutait, Madame? Mais, hélas!
Vos yeux auraient pu feindre, et ne m'abuser pas:
Ils pouvaient me nommer l'auteur de cet outrage.
L'amour est-il muet, ou n'a-t-il qu'un langage?
De quel trouble un regard pouvait me préserver!
Il fallait....

JUNIE.

Il fallait me taire, et vous sauver.
Combien de fois, hélas! puisqu'il faut vous le dire,
Mon cœur de son désordre allait-il vous instruire!
De combien de soupirs interrompant le cours,
Ai-je évité vos yeux que je cherchais toujours!
Quel tourment de se taire en voyant ce qu'on aime!
De l'entendre gémir, de l'affliger soi-même,
Lorsque par un regard on peut le consoler!
Mais quels pleurs ce regard aurait-il fait couler!
Ah! dans ce souvenir, inquiète, troublée,
Je ne me sentais pas assez dissimulée.
De mon front effrayé je craignais la pâleur.
Je trouvais mes regards trop pleins de ma douleur.
Sans cesse il me semblait que Néron en colère
Me venait reprocher trop de soin de vous plaire.
Je craignais mon amour vainement renfermé;
Enfin, j'aurais voulu n'avoir jamais aimé.
Hélas! pour son bonheur, seigneur, et pour le nôtre,
Il n'est que trop instruit de mon cœur et du vôtre.
Allez, encore un coup, cachez-vous à ses yeux.
Mon cœur plus à loisir vous éclaircira mieux:
De mille autres secrets j'aurais compte à vous rendre.

BRITANNICUS.

Ah, n'en voilà que trop! C'est trop me faire entendre,

Madame, mon bonheur, mon crime, vos bontés.
Et savez-vous pour moi tout ce que vous quittez?

SCÈNE VIII.

BRITANNICUS, JUNIE, NÉRON.

BRITANNICUS se jetant aux pieds de Junie.

Quand pourrai-je à vos pieds expier ce reproche?

JUNIE.

Que faites-vous? Hélas! votre rival s'approche.

NÉRON.

Prince, continuez des transports si charmans.
Je conçois vos bontés par ses remercîmens,
Madame; à vos genoux je viens de le surprendre.
Mais il aurait aussi quelque grâce à me rendre;
Ce lieu le favorise, et je vous y retiens
Pour lui faciliter de si doux entretiens.

BRITANNICUS.

Je puis mettre à ses pieds ma douleur ou ma joie;
Partout où sa bonté consent que je la voie;
Et l'aspect de ces lieux, où vous la retenez,
N'a rien dont mes regards doivent être étonnés.

NÉRON

Et que vous montrent-ils qui ne vous avertisse
Qu'il faut qu'on me respecte, et que l'on m'obéisse?

BRITANNICUS.

Ils ne nous ont pas vus l'un et l'autre élever,
Moi, pour vous obéir, et vous, pour me braver:
Et ne s'attendaient pas, lorsqu'ils nous virent naître,
Qu'un jour Domitius me dût parler en maître.

NÉRON.

Ainsi par le destin nos vœux sont traversés;
J'obéissais alors, et vous obéissez.
Si vous n'avez appris à vous laisser conduire,
Vous êtes jeune encore, et l'on peut vous instruire.

BRITANNICUS.

Et qui m'en instruira?

NÉRON.

Tout l'empire à la fois,
Rome.....

BRITANNICUS.

Rome met-elle au nombre de vos droits
Tout ce qu'ont de cruel l'injustice et la force,
Les emprisonnemens, le rapt, et le divorce?

NÉRON.

Rome ne porte point ses regards curieux
Jusque dans des secrets que je cache à ses yeux.
Imitez son respect.

BRITANNICUS.

On sait ce qu'elle en pense.

NÉRON.

Elle se tait du moins; imitez son silence.

BRITANNICUS.

Ainsi Néron commence à ne se plus forcer.

NÉRON.

Néron de vos discours commence à se lasser.

BRITANNICUS.

Chacun devait bénir le bonheur de son règne.

NÉRON.

Heureux ou malheureux, il suffit qu'on me craigne.

BRITANNICUS.

Je connais mal Junie, ou de tels sentimens
Ne mériteront pas ses applaudissemens.

NÉRON.

Du moins, si je ne sais le secret de lui plaire,
Je sais l'art de punir un rival téméraire.

BRITANNICUS.

Pour moi, quelque péril qui me puisse accabler,
Sa seule inimitié peut me faire trembler.

NÉRON.

Souhaitez-la, C'est tout ce que je vous puis dire.

BRITANNICUS.

Le bonheur de lui plaire est le seul où j'aspire.

NÉRON.

Elle vous l'a promis, vous lui plairez toujours

BRITANNICUS.

Je ne sais pas, du moins, épier ses discours.
Je la laisse expliquer sur tout ce qui me touche;
Et ne me cache point pour lui fermer la bouche.

NÉRON.

Je vous entends. Hé bien, gardes!

SCÈNE IX.

LES MÊMES; UN CHEF DES GARDES, GARDES dans le fond.

JUNIE.

Que faites-vous?
C'est votre frère. Hélas! c'est un amant jaloux.
Seigneur, mille malheurs persécutent sa vie.
Ah! son bonheur peut-il exciter votre envie?
Souffrez que de vos cœurs rapprochant les liens,
Je me cache à vos yeux et me dérobe aux siens.
Ma fuite arrêtera vos discordes fatales (1);
Seigneur, j'irai remplir le nombre des vestales.
Ne lui disputez plus mes vœux infortunés;
Souffrez que les dieux seuls en soient importunés.

NÉRON.

L'entreprise, madame, est étrange et soudaine.
Dans son appartement, gardes, qu'on la remène.
Gardez Britannicus dans celui de sa sœur.

BRITANNICUS.

C'est ainsi que Néron sait disputer un cœur.

JUNIE.

Prince, sans l'irriter, cédons à cet orage.

NÉRON.

Gardes, obéissez sans tarder davantage.

(des gardes sortent avec Junie et d'autres avec Britannicus.)

(1) *Variante*:

Ma fuite arrêtera ces désordres funestes,
Et de ma vie aux dieux j'irai donner les restes.

Nota. Cette variante n'est point de Racine.

SCÈNE X.

NÉRON, BURRHUS; UN CHEF DES GARDES, GARDES dans le fond.

BURRHUS.

Que vois-je? O ciel!

NÉRON, sans voir Burrhus.

Ainsi leurs feux sont redoublés.
Je reconnais la main qui les a rassemblés.
Agrippine ne s'est présentée à ma vue,
Ne s'est dans ses discours si long-temps étendue,
Que pour faire jouer ce ressort odieux.
(au chef des gardes.)
Qu'on sache si ma mère est encore en ces lieux.

SCÈNE XI.

NÉRON, BURRHUS; GARDES dans le fond.

NÉRON.

Burrhus, dans ce palais je veux qu'on la retienne,
Et qu'au lieu de sa garde on lui donne la mienne.

BURRHUS.

Quoi, seigneur, sans l'ouïr? Une mère!

NÉRON.

Arrêtez.
J'ignore quel projet, Burrhus, vous méditez;
Mais, depuis quelques jours, tout ce que je désire
Trouve en vous un censeur prêt à me contredire.
Répondez-m'en, vous dis-je; ou, sur votre refus,
D'autres me répondront et d'elle et de Burrhus.

FIN DU TROISIÈME ACTE.

ACTE QUATRIÈME.

SCÈNE I.

AGRIPPINE, BURRHUS.

BURRHUS.

Oui, madame, à loisir vous pourrez vous défendre.
César lui-même ici consent de vous entendre.
Si son ordre au palais vous a fait retenir,
C'est peut-être à dessein de vous entretenir.
Quoi qu'il en soit, si j'ose expliquer ma pensée,
Ne vous souvenez plus qu'il vous ait offensée.
Préparez-vous plutôt à lui tendre les bras.
Défendez-vous, madame, et ne l'accusez pas.
Vous voyez, c'est lui seul que la cour envisage.
Quoiqu'il soit votre fils, et même votre ouvrage,
Il est votre empereur. Vous êtes comme nous,
Sujette à ce pouvoir qu'il a reçu de vous.
Selon qu'il vous menace ou bien qu'il vous caresse,
La cour, autour de vous, ou s'écarte, ou s'empresse.
C'est son appui qu'on cherche en cherchant votre appui.
Mais voici l'empereur.

AGRIPPINE.

Qu'on me laisse avec lui.

SCÈNE II.

AGRIPPINE, NÉRON.

AGRIPPINE, s'asseyant

Approchez-vous, Néron, et prenez votre place.

(Néron s'assied.)

On veut sur vos soupçons que je vous satisfasse.
J'ignore de quel crime on a pu me noircir.
De tous ceux que j'ai faits je vais vous éclaircir.
Vous régnez. Vous savez combien votre naissance
Entre l'empire et vous avait mis de distance.

Les droits de mes aïeux, que Rome a consacrés,
Étaient même sans moi d'inutiles degrés.
Quand de Britannicus la mère condamnée
Laissa de Claudius disputer l'hyménée;
Parmi tant de beautés qui briguèrent son choix,
Qui de ses affranchis mendièrent les voix,
Je souhaitai son lit, dans la seule pensée
De vous laisser au trône où je serais placée.
Je fléchis mon orgueil, j'allai trouver Pallas.
Son maître, chaque jour caressé dans mes bras,
Prit insensiblement dans les yeux de sa nièce
L'amour, où je voulais amener sa tendresse.
Mais ce lien du sang qui nous joignait tous deux,
Épouvantait Claudius d'un lit incestueux:
Il n'osait épouser la fille de son frère.
Le sénat fut séduit. Une loi moins sévère,
Mit Claude dans mon lit, et Rome à mes genoux.
C'était beaucoup pour moi, ce n'était rien pour vous.
Je vous fis sur mes pas entrer dans sa famille;
Je vous nommai son gendre, et vous donnai sa fille;
Silanus, qui l'aimait, s'en vit abandonné,
Et marqua de son sang ce jour infortuné.
Ce n'était rien encore. Eussiez-vous pu prétendre
Qu'un jour Claude à son fils dût préférer son gendre?
De ce même Pallas j'implorai le secours:
Claude vous adopta, vaincu par ses discours,
Vous appela Néron, et du pouvoir suprême
Voulut, avant le temps, vous faire part lui-même.
C'est alors que chacun, rappelant le passé,
Découvrit mon dessein déjà trop avancé;
Que de Britannicus la disgrâce future
Des amis de son père excita le murmure.
Mes promesses aux uns éblouirent les yeux;
L'exil me délivra des plus séditieux.
Claude même, lassé de ma plainte éternelle,
Éloigna de son fils tous ceux de qui le zèle
Engagé, dès long-temps, à suivre son destin,
Pouvait du trône encor lui r'ouvrir le chemin.
Je fis plus. Je choisis moi-même, dans ma suite,
Ceux à qui je voulais qu'on livrât sa conduite.
J'eus soin de vous nommer, par un contraire choix,
Des gouverneurs que Rome honorait de sa voix.
Je fus sourde à la brigue, et crus la renommée.

J'appelai de l'exil, je tirai de l'armée
Et ce même Sénèque, et ce même Burrhus
Qui depuis.... Rome alors estimait leurs vertus.
De Claude, en même temps, épuisant les richesses,
Ma main, sous votre nom, répandait ses largesses.
Les spectacles, les dons, invincibles appas,
Vous attiraient les cœurs du peuple et des soldats
Qui d'ailleurs, réveillant leur tendresse première,
Favorisaient en vous Germanicus mon père.
Cependant Claudius penchait vers son déclin.
Ses yeux, long-temps fermés, s'ouvrirent à la fin.
Il connut son erreur. Occupé de sa crainte,
Il laissa pour son fils échapper quelque plainte ;
Et voulut, mais trop tard, assembler ses amis.
Ses gardes, son palais, son lit m'étaient soumis.
Je lui laissai sans fruit consumer sa tendresse ;
De ses derniers soupirs je me rendis maîtresse.
Mes soins, en apparence, épargnant ses douleurs,
De son fils, en mourant, lui cachèrent les pleurs.
Il mourut. Mille bruits en courent à ma honte.
J'arrêtai de sa mort la nouvelle trop prompte ;
Et tandis que Burrhus allait secrètement
De l'armée en vos mains exiger le serment,
Que vous marchiez au camp conduit sous mes auspices,
Dans Rome les autels fumaient de sacrifices :
Par mes ordres trompeurs, tout le peuple excité,
Du prince déjà mort demandait la santé.
Enfin des légions l'entière obéissance
Ayant de votre empire affermi la puissance,
On vit Claude ; et le peuple, étonné de son sort
Apprit en même temps votre règne et sa mort.
C'est le sincère aveu que je voulais vous faire.
Voilà tous mes forfaits. En voici le salaire.
Du fruit de tant de soins à peine jouissant,
En avez-vous six mois paru reconnaissant,
Que lassé d'un respect qui vous gênait peut-être,
Vous avez affecté de ne me plus connaître.
J'ai vu Burrhus, Sénèque, aigrissant vos soupçons,
De l'infidélité vous tracer des leçons,
Ravis d'être vaincus dans leur propre science.
J'ai vu favoriser de votre confiance
Othon, Sénécion, jeunes voluptueux,
Et de tous vos plaisirs flatteurs respectueux.

Et lorsque, vos mépris excitant mes murmures,
Je vous ai demandé raison de tant d'injures,
Seul recours d'un ingrat qui se voit confondu,
Par de nouveaux affronts vous m'avez répondu.
Aujourd'hui je promets Junie à votre frère;
Ils se flattent tous deux du choix de votre mère;
Que faites-vous? Junie enlevée à la cour
Devient, en une nuit, l'objet de votre amour.
Je vois de votre cœur Octavie effacée,
Prête à sortir du lit où je l'avais placée.
Je vois Pallas banni; votre frère arrêté;
Vous attentez enfin jusqu'à ma liberté;
Burrhus ose sur moi porter ses mains hardies.
Et lorsque convaincu de tant de perfidies,
Vous deviez ne me voir que pour les expier,
C'est vous qui m'ordonnez de me justifier.

NÉRON, après s'être levé.

Je me souviens toujours que je vous dois l'empire.
Et sans vous fatiguer du soin de le redire,
Votre bonté, madame, avec tranquillité,
Pouvait se reposer sur ma fidélité.
Aussi-bien, ces soupçons, ces plaintes assidues
Ont fait croire à tous ceux qui les ont entendues,
Que jadis (j'ose ici vous le dire entre nous)
Vous n'aviez, sous mon nom, travaillé que pour vous.
« Tant d'honneurs, disaient-ils, et tant de déférences
» Sont-ce de ses bienfaits de faibles récompenses?
» Quel crime a donc commis ce fils tant condamné?
» Est-ce pour obéir qu'elle l'a couronné?
» N'est-il de son pouvoir que le dépositaire? »
Non, que si jusque-là j'avais pu vous complaire,
Je n'eusse pris plaisir, madame, à vous céder
Ce pouvoir que vos cris semblaient redemander.
Mais Rome veut un maître, et non une maîtresse.
Vous entendiez les bruits qu'excitait ma faiblesse.
Le sénat, chaque jour, et le peuple irrités
De s'oüir par ma voix dicter vos volontés,
Publiaient qu'en mourant, Claude, avec sa puissance,
M'avait encore laissé sa simple obéissance.
Vous avez vu, cent fois, nos soldats en courroux
Porter, en murmurant, leurs aigles devant vous;
Honteux de rabaisser, par cet indigne usage,
Les héros dont encore elles portent l'image.

Toute autre se serait rendue à leurs discours :
Mais, si vous ne régnez, vous vous plaignez toujours.
Avec Britannicus contre moi réunie,
Vous le fortifiez du parti de Junie ;
Et la main de Pallas trame tous ces complots.
Et lorsque, malgré moi, j'assure mon repos,
On vous voit de colère et de haine animée.
Vous voulez présenter mon rival à l'armée.
Déjà jusques au camp le bruit en a couru.

AGRIPPINE.

Moi, le faire empereur! Ingrat, l'avez-vous cru?
Quel serait mon dessein? Qu'aurais-je pu prétendre?
Quels honneurs dans sa cour, quel rang pourrais-je attendre?
Ah! si sous votre empire on ne m'épargne pas;
Si mes accusateurs observent tous mes pas;
Si de leur empereur ils poursuivent la mère,
Que ferais-je au milieu d'une cour étrangère?
Ils me reprocheraient, non des cris impuissans,
Des desseins étouffés aussitôt que naissans,
Mais des crimes pour vous commis à votre vue,
Et dont je ne serais que trop tôt convaincue.
Vous ne me trompez point; je vois tous vos détours;
Vous êtes un ingrat, vous le fûtes toujours,
Dès vos plus jeunes ans, mes soins et mes tendresses
N'ont arraché de vous que de feintes caresses.
Rien ne vous a pu vaincre, et votre dureté
Aurait dû dans son cours arrêter ma bonté.
(se levant.)
Que je suis malheureuse! et par quelle infortune,
Faut-il que tous mes soins me rendent importune?
(Néron se rassied.)
Je n'ai qu'un fils. O ciel, qui m'entends aujourd'hui;
T'ai-je fait quelques vœux qui ne fussent pour lui?
Remords, crainte, périls, rien ne m'a retenue.
J'ai vaincu ses mépris, j'ai détourné ma vue
Des malheurs qui dès lors me furent annoncés.
J'ai fait ce que j'ai pu. Vous régnez, c'est assez.
Avec ma liberté, que vous m'avez ravie,
Si vous le souhaitez, prenez encor ma vie,
Pourvu que par ma mort tout le peuple irrité,
Ne vous ravisse pas ce qui m'a tant coûté.

NÉRON, s'étant levé.

Hé bien donc, prononcez. Que voulez-vous qu'on fasse?

AGRIPPINE.

De mes accusateurs qu'on punisse l'audace ;
Que de Britannicus on calme le courroux ;
Que Junie, à son choix, puisse prendre un époux ;
Qu'ils soient libres tous deux, et que Pallas demeure ;
Que vous me permettiez de vous voir à toute heure.

SCÈNE III.

AGRIPPINE, NÉRON, *BURRHUS* ; et GARDES dans le fond.

AGRIPPINE, apercevant Burrhus.

Que ce même Burrhus, qui nous vient écouter,
A votre porte enfin n'ose plus m'arrêter.

NÉRON.

Oui, madame, je veux que ma reconnaissance
Désormais dans les cœurs grave votre puissance ;
Et je bénis déjà cette heureuse froideur
Qui de notre amitié va rallumer l'ardeur.
Quoi que Pallas ait fait, il suffit, je l'oublie.
Avec Britannicus je me réconcilie ;
Et, quant à cet amour qui nous a séparés,
Je vous fais notre arbitre, et vous nous jugerez.
Allez donc, et portez cette joie à mon frère.
Gardes, qu'on obéisse aux ordres de ma mère.

(Agrippine sort, les gardes la suivent.)

SCÈNE IV.

NÉRON assis, BURRHUS.

BURRHUS.

Que cette paix, seigneur, et ces embrassemens
Vont offrir à mes yeux des spectacles charmans !
Vous savez si jamais ma voix lui fut contraire ;
Si de son amitié j'ai voulu me distraire,
Et si j'ai mérité cet injuste courroux.

NÉRON.

Je ne vous flatte point, je me plaignais de vous,
Burrhus ; je vous ai crus tous deux d'intelligence.
Mais son inimitié vous rend ma confiance.

Elle se hâte trop, Burrhus, de triompher.
J'embrasse mon rival, mais c'est pour l'étouffer.

BURRHUS.

Quoi, seigneur!....

NÉRON.

C'en est trop. Il faut que sa ruine
Me délivre à jamais des fureurs d'Agrippine.
Tant qu'il respirera je ne vis qu'à demi.
Elle m'a fatigué de ce nom ennemi;
Et je ne prétends pas que sa coupable audace
Une seconde fois lui promette ma place.

BURRHUS.

Elle va donc bientôt pleurer Britannicus?

NÉRON.

Avant la fin du jour je ne le craindrai plus.

BURRHUS.

Et qui de ce dessein vous inspire l'envie?

NÉRON.

Ma gloire, mon amour, ma sûreté, ma vie.

BURRHUS.

Non, quoi que vous disiez, cet horrible dessein
Ne fut jamais, seigneur, conçu dans votre sein.

NÉRON.

Burrhus!

BURRHUS.

De votre bouche, ô ciel! puis-je l'apprendre
Vous-même, sans frémir, avez-vu pu l'entendre?
Songez-vous dans quel sang vous allez vous baigner?
Néron dans tous les cœurs est-il las de régner?
Que dira-t-on de vous? Quelle est votre pensée?

NÉRON.

Quoi, toujours enchaîné de ma gloire passée,
J'aurai devant les yeux je ne sais quel amour,
Que le hasard nous donne et nous ôte en un jour!
Soumis à tous leurs vœux, à mes désirs contraire,
Suis-je leur empereur seulement pour leur plaire?

BURRHUS.

Et ne suffit-il pas, seigneur, à vos souhaits
Que le bonheur public soit un de vos bienfaits:

C'est à vous à choisir, vous êtes encor maître.
Vertueux jusqu'ici, vous pouvez toujours l'être.
Le chemin est tracé, rien ne vous retient plus.
Vous n'avez qu'à marcher de vertus en vertus.
Mais si de vos flatteurs vous suivez la maxime,
Il vous faudra, seigneur, courir de crime en crime;
Soutenir vos rigueurs par d'autres cruautés,
Et laver dans le sang vos bras ensanglantés.
Britannicus mourant excitera le zèle
De ses amis tout prêts à prendre sa querelle;
Ces vengeurs trouveront de nouveaux défenseurs
Qui, même après leur mort, auront des successeurs.
Vous allumez un feu qui ne pourra s'éteindre.
Craint de tout l'univers, il vous faudra tout craindre;
Toujours punir; toujours trembler dans vos projets;
Et pour vos ennemis compter tous vos sujets.
Ah! de vos premiers ans l'heureuse expérience
Vous fait-elle, seigneur, haïr votre innocence?
Songez-vous au bonheur qui les a signalés?
Dans quel repos, ô ciel, les avez-vous coulés!
Quel plaisir de penser et de dire en vous-même:
« Partout, en ce moment, on me bénit, on m'aime!
» On ne voit point le peuple à mon nom s'alarmer;
» Le ciel dans tous leurs pleurs ne m'entend point nommer;
» Leur sombre inimitié ne suit point mon visage;
» Je vois partout les cœurs voler à mon passage! »
Tels étaient vos plaisirs. Quel changement, ô dieux!
Le sang le plus abject vous était précieux.
Un jour, il m'en souvient, le sénat équitable
Vous pressait de souscrire à la mort d'un coupable:
Vous résistiez, seigneur, à leur sévérité;
Votre cœur s'accusait de trop de cruauté;
Et, plaignant les malheurs attachés à l'empire:
« Je voudrais, disiez-vous, ne savoir pas écrire! »
Non, ou vous me croirez, ou bien de ce malheur
Ma mort m'épargnera la vue et la douleur.
On ne me verra point survivre à votre gloire,
Si vous allez commettre une action si noire.

(Se jetant aux pieds de Néron.)

Me voilà prêt, seigneur. Avant que de partir,
Faites percer ce cœur qui n'y peut consentir.
Appelez les cruels qui vous l'ont inspirée;
Qu'ils viennent essayer leur main mal assurée.

Mais je vois que mes pleurs touchent mon empereur;
Je vois que sa vertu frémit de leur fureur.
Ne perdez point de temps, nommez-moi les perfides
Qui vous osent donner ces conseils parricides;
Appelez votre frère, oubliez dans ses bras....

NÉRON.

Ah! que demandez-vous?

BURRHUS.

Non, il ne vous hait pas,
Seigneur; on le trahit, je sais son innocence,
Je vous réponds pour lui de son obéissance.
J'y cours. Je vais presser un entretien si doux. (1)

NÉRON, se levant.

Dans mon appartement qu'il m'attende avec vous.

SCÈNE V.

NÉRON assis, NARCISSE.

NARCISSE.

Seigneur, j'ai tout prévu pour une mort si juste;
Le poison est tout prêt. La fameuse Locuste
A redoublé pour moi ses soins officieux;
Elle a fait expirer un esclave à mes yeux;
Et le fer est moins prompt pour trancher une vie,
Que le nouveau poison que sa main me confie.

NÉRON.

Narcisse, c'est assez: je reconnais ce soin;
Et ne souhaite pas que vous alliez plus loin.

NARCISSE.

Quoi! pour Britannicus votre haine affaiblie
Me défend....

NÉRON.

Oui, Narcisse; on nous réconcilie.

NARCISSE.

Je me garderai bien de vous en détourner,

(1) *Variante*:

NÉRON.

Dans mon appartement qu'il m'attende avec vous.

BURRHUS.

J'y cours. Je vais presser un entretien si doux.

Seigneur. Mais il s'est vu tantôt emprisonner.
Cette offense en son cœur sera long-temps nouvelle.
Il n'est point de secrets que le temps ne révèle.
Il saura que ma main lui devait présenter
Un poison que votre ordre avait fait apprêter.
Les dieux de ce dessein puissent-ils le distraire!
Mais peut-être il fera ce que vous n'osez faire.

NÉRON.

On répond de son cœur, et je vaincrai le mien.

NARCISSE.

Et l'hymen de Junie en est-il le lien?
Seigneur, lui faites-vous encor ce sacrifice?

NÉRON.

C'est prendre trop de soin. Quoi qu'il en soit, Narcisse,
Je ne le compte plus parmi mes ennemis.

NARCISSE.

Agrippine, seigneur, se l'était bien promis.
Elle a repris sur vous son souverain empire.

NÉRON, se levant.

Quoi donc? Qu'a-t-elle dit? et que voulez-vous dire?

NARCISSE.

Elle s'en est vantée assez publiquement.

NÉRON.

De quoi?

NARCISSE.

Qu'elle n'avait qu'à vous voir un moment;
Qu'à tout ce grand éclat, à ce courroux funeste,
On verrait succéder un silence modeste;
Que vous-même à la paix souscririez le premier:
Heureux, que sa bonté daignât tout oublier.

NÉRON.

Mais, Narcisse, dis-moi, que veux-tu que je fasse?
Je n'ai que trop de pente à punir son audace;
Et, si je m'en croyais, ce triomphe indiscret
Serait bientôt suivi d'un éternel regret.
Mais de tout l'univers quel sera le langage?
Sur les pas des tyrans veux-tu que je m'engage?
Et que Rome, effaçant tant de titres d'honneur,
Me laisse, pour tous noms, celui d'empoisonneur?
Ils mettront ma vengeance au rang des parricides.

NARCISSE.

Et prenez-vous, seigneur, leurs caprices pour guides?
Avez-vous prétendu qu'ils se tairaient toujours?
Est-ce à vous de prêter l'oreille à leurs discours?
De vos propres désirs perdez-vous la mémoire?
Et serez-vous le seul que vous n'oserez croire?
Mais, seigneur, les Romains ne vous sont pas connus.

(Néron se rassied.)

Non, non, dans leurs discours ils sont plus retenus.
Tant de précaution affaiblit votre règne;
Ils croiront, en effet, mériter qu'on les craigne,
Au joug, depuis long-temps, ils se sont façonnés;
Ils adorent la main qui les tient enchaînés.
Vous les verrez toujours ardens à vous complaire.
Leur prompte servitude a fatigué Tibère.
Moi-même, revêtu d'un pouvoir emprunté,
Que je reçus de Claude avec la liberté,
J'ai cent fois, dans le cours de ma gloire passée,
Tenté leur patience, et ne l'ai point lassée.
D'un empoisonnement vous craignez la noirceur?
Faites périr le frère, abandonnez la sœur;
Rome, sur les autels prodiguant les victimes,
Fussent-ils innocens, leur trouvera des crimes.
Vous verrez mettre au rang des jours infortunés
Ceux où jadis la sœur et le frère sont nés.

NÉRON.

Narcisse, encore un coup, je ne puis l'entreprendre.
J'ai promis à Burrhus; il a fallu me rendre.
Je ne veux point encore, en lui manquant de foi,
Donner à sa vertu des armes contre moi.
J'oppose à ses raisons un courage inutile:
Je ne l'écoute point avec un cœur tranquille.

NARCISSE.

Burrhus ne pense pas, seigneur, tout ce qu'il dit.
Son adroite vertu ménage son crédit;
Ou plutôt ils n'ont tous qu'une même pensée.
Ils verraient, par ce coup, leur puissance abaissée;
Vous seriez libre alors, seigneur; et, devant vous,
Ces maîtres orgueilleux fléchiraient comme nous.
Quoi donc? Ignorez-vous tout ce qu'ils osent dire?
« Néron, s'ils en sont crus, n'est point né pour l'empire;
» Il ne dit, il ne fait que ce qu'on lui prescrit.
» Burrhus conduit son cœur, Sénèque son esprit.

» Pour

» Pour toute ambition, pour vertu singulière,
» Il excelle à conduire un char dans la carrière;
» A disputer des prix indignes de ses mains;
» A se donner lui-même en spectacle aux Romains;
» A venir prodiguer sa voix sur un théâtre;
» A réciter des chants qu'il veut qu'on idolâtre;
» Tandis que des soldats, de momens en momens,
» Vont arracher pour lui des applaudissemens. »
Ah! ne voulez-vous pas les forcer à se taire?

NÉRON, se levant.

Viens, Narcisse. Allons voir ce que nous devons faire.

FIN DU QUATRIÈME ACTE.

ACTE CINQUIÈME.

SCÈNE I.

JUNIE, BRITANNICUS.

BRITANNICUS.

Oui, madame, Néron, qui l'aurait pu penser!
Dans son appartement m'attend pour m'embrasser.
Il y fait de sa cour inviter la jeunesse.
Il veut que d'un festin la pompe et l'allégresse
Confirment à leurs yeux la foi de nos sermens,
Et réchauffent l'ardeur de nos embrassemens.
Il éteint cet amour, source de tant de haine;
Il vous fait de mon sort arbitre souveraine.
Pour moi, quoique banni du rang de mes aïeux,
Quoique de leur dépouille il se pare à mes yeux,
Depuis qu'à mon amour cessant d'être contraire,
Il semble me céder la gloire de vous plaire;
Mon cœur, je l'avoûrai, lui pardonne en secret,
Et lui laisse le reste avec moins de regret.
Quoi, je ne serai plus séparé de vos charmes!
Quoi, même en ce moment, je puis voir sans alarmes
Ces yeux, que n'ont émus ni soupirs ni terreur;
Qui m'ont sacrifié l'empire et l'empereur!
Ah, madame! Mais quoi? Quelle nouvelle crainte
Tient, parmi mes transports, votre joie en contrainte?
D'où vient qu'en m'écoutant, vos yeux, vos tristes yeux,
Avec de longs regards, se tournent vers les cieux?
Qu'est-ce que vous craignez?

JUNIE.

Je l'ignore moi-même.
Mais je crains:

BRITANNICUS.

Vous m'aimez?

JUNIE

Hélas, si je vous aime!

BRITANNICUS.

Néron ne trouble plus notre félicité.

JUNIE.

Mais me répondez-vous de sa sincérité?

BRITANNICUS.

Quoi! vous le soupçonnez d'une haine couverte?

JUNIE.

Néron m'aimait tantôt, il jurait votre perte;
Il me fuit, il vous cherche. Un si grand changement
Peut-il être, seigneur, l'ouvrage d'un moment?

BRITANNICUS.

Cet ouvrage, madame, est un coup d'Agrippine:
Elle a cru que ma perte entraînait sa ruine.
Grâce aux préventions de son esprit jaloux,
Nos plus grands ennemis ont combattu pour nous.
Je m'en fie aux transports qu'elle m'a fait paraître.
Je m'en fie à Burrhus. J'en crois même son maître.
Je crois qu'à mon exemple, impuissant à trahir,
Il hait à cœur ouvert, ou cesse de haïr.

JUNIE.

Seigneur, ne jugez pas de son cœur par le vôtre;
Sur des pas différens vous marchez l'un et l'autre.
Je ne connais Néron et la cour que d'un jour;
Mais, si j'ose le dire, hélas! dans cette cour,
Combien tout ce qu'on dit est loin de ce qu'on pense!
Que la bouche et le cœur sont peu d'intelligence!
Avec combien de joie on y trahit sa foi!
Quel séjour étranger et pour vous et pour moi!

BRITANNICUS.

Mais que son amitié soit véritable ou feinte,
Si vous craignez Néron, lui-même est-il sans crainte?
Non, non, il n'ira point, par un lâche attentat,
Soulever contre lui le peuple et le sénat.
Que dis-je? il reconnaît sa dernière injustice;
Ses remords ont paru, même aux yeux de Narcisse.
Ah! s'il vous avait dit, ma princesse, à quel point....

JUNIE.

Mais, Narcisse, seigneur, ne vous trahit-il point?

BRITANNICUS.

Et pourquoi voulez-vous que mon cœur s'en défie?

JUNIE.

Et que sais-je! Il y va, seigneur, de votre vie.
Tout m'est suspect. Je crains que tout ne soit séduit.
Je crains Néron. Je crains le malheur qui me suit.
D'un noir pressentiment, malgré moi, prévenue,
Je vous laisse, à regret, éloigner de ma vue.
Hélas! si cette paix dont vous vous repaissez,
Couvrait contre vos jours quelques piéges dressés;
Si Néron, irrité de notre intelligence,
Avait choisi la nuit pour cacher sa vengeance;
S'il préparait ses coups tandis que je vous vois;
Et si je vous parlais pour la dernière fois!
Ah, prince!

BRITANNICUS.

Vous pleurez! Ah, ma chère princesse!
Et pour moi jusque-là votre cœur s'intéresse!
Quoi, madame, en un jour où, plein de sa grandeur,
Néron croit éblouir vos yeux de sa splendeur,
Dans des lieux où chacun me fuit et le révère,
Aux pompes de sa cour préférer ma misère!
Quoi, dans ce même jour, et dans ces mêmes lieux,
Refuser un empire, et pleurer à mes yeux!
Mais, madame, arrêtez ces précieuses larmes;
Mon retour va bientôt dissiper vos alarmes.
Je me rendrais suspect par un plus long séjour.
Adieu. Je vais, le cœur tout plein de mon amour,
Au milieu des transports d'une aveugle jeunesse,
Ne voir, n'entretenir que ma belle princesse.
Adieu.

JUNIE.

Prince....

BRITANNICUS.

On m'attend, madame; il faut partir.

JUNIE.

Mais, du moins, attendez qu'on vous vienne avertir.

SCÈNE II.

JUNIE, AGRIPPINE, BRITANNICUS.

AGRIPPINE.

Prince, que tardez-vous? Partez en diligence.
Néron impatient se plaint de votre absence.

La joie et le plaisir de tous les conviés
Attend, pour éclater, que vous vous embrassiez.
Ne faites point languir une si juste envie,
Allez. Et nous, madame, allons chez Octavie.

BRITANNICUS.

Allez, belle Junie, et, d'un esprit content,
Hâtez-vous d'embrasser ma sœur qui vous attend.
(à Agrippine.)
Dès que je le pourrai je reviens sur vos traces,
Madame; et de vos soins j'irai vous rendre grâces.

SCÈNE III.

JUNIE, AGRIPPINE.

AGRIPPINE.

Madame, ou je me trompe, ou, durant vos adieux,
Quelques pleurs répandus ont obscurci vos yeux.
Puis-je savoir quel trouble a formé ce nuage?
Doutez-vous d'une paix dont je fais mon ouvrage?

JUNIE.

Après tous les ennuis que ce jour m'a coûtés,
Ai-je pu rassurer mes esprits agités?
Hélas! à peine encor je conçois ce miracle.
Quand même à vos bontés je craindrais quelque obstacle,
Le changement, madame, est commun à la cour;
Et toujours quelque crainte accompagne l'amour.

AGRIPPINE.

Il suffit, j'ai parlé, tout a changé de face:
Mes soins à vos soupçons ne laissent point de place.
Je réponds d'une paix jurée entre mes mains;
Néron m'en a donné des gages trop certains.
Ah! si vous aviez vu par combien de caresses
Il m'a renouvelé la foi de ses promesses!
Par quels embrassemens il vient de m'arrêter!
Ses bras, dans nos adieux, ne pouvaient me quitter.
Sa facile bonté, sur son front répandue,
Jusqu'aux moindres secrets est d'abord descendue.
Il s'épanchait en fils qui vient, en liberté,
Dans le sein de sa mère oublier sa fierté.
Mais, bientôt reprenant un visage sévère,
Tel que d'un empereur qui consulte sa mère,
Sa confidence auguste a mis entre mes mains

Des secrets d'où dépend le destin des humains.
Non, il le faut ici confesser à sa gloire,
Son cœur n'enferme point une malice noire;
Et nos seuls ennemis, altérant sa bonté,
Abusaient contre nous de sa facilité.
Mais enfin, à son tour, leur puissance décline;
Rome, encore une fois, va connaître Agrippine.
Déjà de ma faveur on adore le bruit.
Cependant en ces lieux n'attendons pas la nuit.
Passons chez Octavie, et donnons-lui le reste
D'un jour autant heureux que je l'ai cru funeste.
Mais qu'est-ce que j'entends? Quel tumulte confus?
Que peut-on faire?

JUNIE.

O ciel, sauvez Britannicus!

SCÈNE IV.

JUNIE, BURRHUS, AGRIPPINE.

AGRIPPINE.

Burrhus, où courez-vous? Arrêtez. Que veut dire...

BURRHUS.

Madame, c'en est fait, Britannicus expire.

JUNIE.

Ah, mon prince!

AGRIPPINE.

Il expire!

BURRHUS.

Ou plutôt il est mort, Madame.

JUNIE.

Pardonnez, madame, à ce transport.
Je vais le secourir, si je puis, ou le suivre.

SCÈNE V.

BURRHUS, AGRIPPINE.

AGRIPPINE.

Quel attentat, Burrhus!

BURRHUS.

Je n'y pourrai survivre, Madame; il faut quitter la cour et l'empereur.

AGRIPPINE.

Quoi, du sang de son frère il n'a point eu d'horreur?

BURRHUS.

Ce dessein s'est conduit avec plus de mystère.
A peine l'empereur a vu venir son frère,
Il se lève, il l'embrasse, on se tait, et soudain
César prend le premier une coupe à la main.
« Pour achever ce jour sous de meilleurs auspices,
» Ma main de cette coupe épanche les prémices,
» Dit-il : Dieux! que j'appelle à cette effusion,
» Venez favoriser notre réunion. »
Par les mêmes sermens Britannicus se lie.
La coupe dans ses mains par Narcisse est remplie;
Mais ses lèvres à peine en ont touché les bords,
Le fer ne produit point de si puissans efforts,
Madame, la lumière à ses yeux est ravie,
Il tombe sur son lit sans chaleur et sans vie.
Jugez combien ce coup frappe tous les esprits;
La moitié s'épouvante, et sort avec des cris.
Mais ceux qui de la cour ont un plus long usage,
Sur les yeux de César composent leur visage.
Cependant sur son lit il demeure penché;
D'aucun étonnement il ne paraît touché.
« Ce mal dont vous craignez, dit-il, la violence,
» A souvent, sans péril, attaqué son enfance. »
Narcisse veut en vain affecter quelque ennui,
Et sa perfide joie éclate malgré lui.
Pour moi, dût l'empereur punir ma hardiesse,
D'une odieuse cour j'ai traversé la presse;
Et j'allais, accablé de cet assassinat,
Pleurer Britannicus, César, et tout l'état.

AGRIPPINE.

Le voici. Vous verrez si c'est moi qui l'inspire.

SCÈNE VI.

BURRHUS, AGRIPPINE, *NARCISSE*, *NÉRON*, GARDES.

NÉRON, voyant Agrippine.

Dieux!

AGRIPPINE.

Arrêtez, Néron. J'ai deux mots à vous dire.

Britannicus est mort; je reconnais les coups : (1)
Je connais l'assassin.

NÉRON.

Et qui, madame?

AGRIPPINE.

Vous.

NÉRON.

Moi! Voilà les soupçons dont vous êtes capable.
Il n'est point de malheur dont je ne sois coupable.
Et, si l'on veut, madame, écouter vos discours,
Ma main de Claude même aura tranché les jours.
Son fils vous était cher, sa mort peut vous confondre;
Mais des coups du destin je ne puis pas répondre.

AGRIPPINE.

Non, non, Britannicus est mort empoisonné.
Narcisse a fait le coup, vous l'avez ordonné.

NÉRON.

Madame, mais qui peut vous tenir ce langage?

NARCISSE.

Eh, seigneur, ce soupçon vous fait-il tant d'outrage?
Britannicus, madame, eut des desseins secrets,
Qui vous auraient coûté de plus justes regrets.
Il aspirait plus loin qu'à l'hymen de Junie;
De vos propres bontés il vous aurait punie.
Il vous trompait vous-même, et son cœur offensé
Prétendait tôt ou tard rappeler le passé.
Soit donc que malgré vous le sort vous ait servie;
Soit qu'instruit des complots qui menaçaient sa vie,
Sur ma fidélité César s'en soit remis,
Laissez les pleurs, madame, à vos seuls ennemis.
Qu'ils mettent ce malheur au rang des plus sinistres;
Mais vous....

AGRIPPINE.

Poursuis, Néron : avec de tels ministres,
Par des faits glorieux tu vas te signaler.
Poursuis. Tu n'as pas fait ce pas pour reculer.
Ta main a commencé par le sang de ton frère,
Je prévois que tes coups viendront jusqu'à ta mère.
Dans le fond de ton cœur, je sais que tu me hais.
Tu voudras t'affranchir du joug de mes bienfaits.

(1) Burrhus, Agrippine, Néron, Narcisse.

Mais

Mais je veux que ma mort te soit même inutile :
Ne crois pas qu'en mourant je te laisse tranquille.
Rome, ce ciel, ce jour, que tu reçus de moi,
Partout, à tout moment, m'offriront devant toi.
Tes remords te suivront comme autant de furies.
Tu croiras les calmer par d'autres barbaries.
Ta fureur, s'irritant soi-même dans son cours,
D'un sang toujours nouveau marquera tous tes jours.
Mais j'espère qu'enfin le ciel, las de tes crimes,
Ajoutera ta perte à tant d'autres victimes;
Qu'après t'être couvert de leur sang et du mien,
Tu te verras forcé de répandre le tien;
Et ton nom paraîtra, dans la race future,
Aux plus cruels tyrans une cruelle injure.
Voilà ce que mon cœur se présage de toi.
Adieu. Tu peux sortir.

NÉRON.

Narcisse, suivez-moi.

SCÈNE VII.

BURRHUS, AGRIPPINE.

AGRIPPINE.

Ah, ciel! de mes soupçons quelle était l'injustice!
Je condamnais Burrhus pour écouter Narcisse.
Burrhus, avez-vous vu quels regards furieux
Néron, en me quittant, m'a laissés pour adieux?
C'en est fait: le cruel n'a plus rien qui l'arrête;
Le coup qu'on m'a prédit va tomber sur ma tête.
Il vous accablera vous-même à votre tour.

BURRHUS.

Ah! madame, pour moi j'ai vécu trop d'un jour.
Plût au ciel que sa main, heureusement cruelle,
Eût fait sur moi l'essai de sa fureur nouvelle!
Qu'il ne m'eût pas donné, par ce triste attentat,
Un gage trop certain des malheurs de l'état!
Son crime seul n'est pas ce qui me désespère :
Sa jalousie a pu l'armer contre son frère.
Mais, s'il vous faut, madame, expliquer ma douleur,
Néron l'a vu mourir sans changer de couleur.
Ses yeux indifférens ont déjà la constance
D'un tyran dans le crime endurci dès l'enfance.

Qu'il achève, madame, et qu'il fasse périr
Un ministre importun qui ne le peut souffrir.
Hélas ! loin de vouloir éviter sa colère,
La plus soudaine mort me sera la plus chère.

SCÈNE VIII et dernière.

BURRHUS, AGRIPPINE, ALBINE.

ALBINE.

Ah, madame ! ah ! seigneur, courez vers l'empereur ;
Venez sauver César de sa propre fureur ;
Il se voit pour jamais séparé de Junie.

AGRIPPINE.

Quoi, Junie elle-même a terminé sa vie ?

ALBINE.

Pour accabler César d'un éternel ennui,
Madame, sans mourir, elle est morte pour lui.
Vous savez de ces lieux comme elle s'est ravie.
Elle a feint de passer chez la triste Octavie ;
Mais bientôt elle a pris des chemins écartés,
Où mes yeux ont suivi ses pas précipités.
Des portes du palais elle sort éperdue.
D'abord elle a d'Auguste aperçu la statue :
Et mouillant de ses pleurs le marbre de ses pieds,
Que de ses bras pressans elle tenait liés :
« Prince, par ces genoux, dit-elle, que j'embrasse,
» Protége, en ce moment, le reste de ta race.
» Rome, dans ton palais, vient de voir immoler
» Le seul de tes neveux qui te pût ressembler.
» On veut, après sa mort, que je lui sois parjure :
» Mais, pour lui conserver une foi toujours pure,
» Prince, je me dévoue à ces dieux immortels
» Dont ta vertu t'a fait partager les autels. »
Le peuple cependant, que ce spectacle étonne,
Vole de toutes parts, se presse, l'environne,
S'attendrit à ses pleurs, et, plaignant son ennui,
D'une commune voix la prend sous son appui.
Ils la menent au temple, où, depuis tant d'années,
Au culte des autels nos vierges destinées
Gardent fidèlement le dépôt précieux
Du feu toujours ardent qui brûle pour nos dieux.

César les voit partir sans oser les distraire.
Narcisse, plus hardi, s'empresse pour lui plaire;
Il vole vers Junie; et, sans s'épouvanter,
D'une profane main commence à l'arrêter.
De mille coups mortels son audace est punie :
Son infidèle sang rejaillit sur Junie.
César, de tant d'objets en même temps frappé,
Le laisse entre les mains qui l'ont enveloppé.
Il rentre. Chacun fuit son silence farouche.
Le seul nom de Junie échappe de sa bouche.
Il marche sans dessein : ses yeux mal assurés
N'osent lever au ciel leurs regards égarés ;
Et l'on craint, si la nuit, jointe à la solitude,
Vient de son désespoir aigrir l'inquiétude,
Si vous l'abandonnez plus long-temps sans secours,
Que sa douleur bientôt n'attente sur ses jours.
Le temps presse. Courez. Il ne faut qu'un caprice.
Il se perdrait, madame.

AGRIPPINE.

Il se ferait justice.
Mais, Burrhus, allons voir jusqu'où vont ses transports.
Voyons quel changement produiront ses remords ;
S'il voudra désormais suivre d'autres maximes.

BURRHUS.

Plût aux dieux que ce fût le dernier de ses crimes!

FIN DU CINQUIÈME ET DERNIER ACTE.

ON PAUPERISM

AND

THE POOR LAWS.

WITH A SUPPLEMENT.

The Labourer is worthy of his Hire.

LONDON:

PUBLISHED BY EFFINGHAM WILSON, ROYAL EXCHANGE.

M.DCCC.XXI.

2*s*.

ADDRESSED

TO

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

M. P.

TO THE PUBLIC.

My present reason for publishing this short Essay is two-fold.—

First.—As it regards myself, that my unavoidable departure from this country precludes me from any attempt to con over the pamphlets of the day, on Pauperism, the Poor Laws, and Mendicity; and, what I consider as a still greater loss, I cannot even have the opportunity of conversing with those of my acquaintance and friends, who, from their long experience and great practical knowledge, possess a much more intimate acquaintance with these subjects, than I can pretend to.

Secondly.—That, if this hastily-written tract offers any hints on Pauperism and Mendicity (for I cannot in principle separate them) that may appear useful, I cannot introduce the same to the public under the sanction (provided it be allowed) of a better or more respected name than Wilberforce. The narrative, upon the whole, may not be so ex-

planatory on this varied and difficult subject, as it deserves; but it appears to me sufficiently so, to allow of any gentleman residing in the country, any individual, any parish, village, or town vestry, trying the same experiment, upon a larger scale; and, as it regards mendicants, without any application to government for assistance, or the repeal of any laws; since the principle, I recommend for adoption, is simple, and the mode very economical, viz:—to do away with every attempt to *discriminate*, except on personal and long-tried knowledge; to consider every one, whether pauper or beggar, as speaking the truth, when he or she says, that they are famished and pennyless; to offer, in such case, to each individual, wherewithal to shelter himself from the weather, and to *satisfy that hunger* of which he complains; to relieve the necessitous object with an ample meal, but, at the same time, to give nothing that can possibly induce the idle and the profligate wilfully to throw themselves out of work, to deceive the public by tales of woe and pretended misery, and thereby to seize that pittance destined, by prudential charity, for deserving objects alone.

ON PAUPERISM,

&c.

THE present system of Pauperism and Poor Rates has been in operation about two hundred and fifty years, and had as unexpected and irregular an origin, as the result has been unfortunate and replete with mischief, both to the property of the richer and morals of the poorer class. In consequence of the abolition of a number of Monasteries and Abbeys, by Henry the VIII. a numerous body of paupers, vagrants, and idle beggars (exclusive of the monastic orders), who used to be supported on the alms of the church, and the charities of those endowments previously possessed by the catholic clergy, were deprived of their customary support, and let loose upon the country, to beg, to pilfer, and to plunder; as may be proved, by those repeated acts passed to reclaim them, and to ameliorate the condition of a class of men, suddenly

deprived of their subsistence; and who, from being brought up in idleness, were averse to labor.

"*Pauper ubique jacet,*" was the exclamation of Queen Elizabeth, on observing the vast throngs of the poor flocking to see her, during her progress through her kingdom: and to the particular distress, induced, at that period, from a variety of concurring causes, and to those natural feelings of benevolence and sympathy, which do honour to the queen, as a woman, but, if I may separate the two characters, do equal discredit to her judgment as a sovereign, (in attempting to legislate the private charities of her subjects,) England owes the establishment of coercive Poor Laws, and its nominal *work-houses*, which are any thing but a refuge for the aged and industrious; its enormous Poor Rates, and all their concomitant evils of disputed settlements, endless bickerings, and expensive law-suits; in short, those consequences that must ensue, when the maintenance of an aged or helpless pauper, instead of being private and voluntary, as in remoter times, or as in Scotland, and indeed in every other civilized country, at the present day, is made compulsory by an act of the legislature; when the donation, so enforced, is bestowed, without feeling, upon the worthy and the worthless, and received without the slightest sensation of gratitude or obligation; when the revenue of our empire, unsupported by colonies

and foreign conquests, is inadequate to the increased demands, not of the aged and the helpless, but of the young, the dissolute, and idle pauper; when the latter are encouraged by enactments of the legislature, by heedless magistrates, and ignorant overseers, to shun work as the burden of life, rather than to seek it as their best means of subsistence; and, sorry as I am to say, it is frequently their pride—their boast, to enumerate their monthly and daily gains, without labor, care, or foresight, from the pockets of the industrious, and the middling or higher classes of the community; when, without fear of contradiction, I can assert that in some parishes, from four to five, and even six tenths of the population (I might add more), either are, or have been, paupers. Good God! might a stranger well exclaim, and can that country be England?—That there are *some* few laborers, who, refusing this eleemosynary aid, and trusting to strength of arm, and a hardy constitution, earn no other bread, and ask no other clothing, or lodging, than what they gain honestly by the sweat of their brow; that there are also *some* vigilant, well-informed, and active magistrates; *some* able, upright overseers, who do their duty with equal lenity and justice; I can speak of, as coming within my own limited observation; but, that there are more, I fear too many more, who may be characterized, negatively, as not being what I have mentioned, no one, I believe, will deny.

To enter into any detail of the increasing deterioration of property to the middling and higher orders of the community, and the demoralizing consequence of the Poor Rates, upon the lower classes, is unnecessary. It is a more than twice told tale, and the sentiments of the well informed and disinterested, on this head, approach as near to unanimity as possible; and when we consider that the interests of some manufacturers, artisans, and professional men, are so blended with this question, that a natural bias is given to their minds, we cannot, in reason, expect that every one should coincide—for true it is in life, as Butler wittily remarks,

> "He that's convinced against his will
> Is of the same opinion still."

I might, with greater propriety, con over the remedies suggested by hundreds of writers, during the last century; some experienced and well-informed on this subject, and some otherwise.

To many of these authors, the subject is so vast and fearful, that they dare not grapple with it, and consequently their only attempt has been to botch the sore, rather than boldly to open and probe the wound to the bottom; others again are daring—even to rashness, and in endeavouring to rid the country of one evil, would plunge it, without knowing, into anarchy, rebellion, and revolution; such, to cite only one, appears to be the

proposition of an otherwise intelligent clergyman, who recommends the passing of a law, to discourage matrimony in all who have not the means of providing for a family, and to advertise every one, that twelve years hence, no one, at least of the labouring classes, should be entitled to parish relief, or support of any kind.

This, as some reviewer justly observes, is nothing, more nor less, than declaring, that on that day twelve years, after passing the proposed act, there shall be an insurrection and rebellion in the country; since those, who upon this sudden change, for sudden it would be, notwithstanding a postponement of the evil day, could not find labor or food even to a bare subsistence, must otherwise starve in the midst of plenty.

Without waiting the publication of that census, now ordered to be taken, we may, I believe, consider it as an undisputed fact, that the population of the country exceeds the quantum of labor required by the farmer, the artisan, and manufacturer;—if this be granted, it appears unnecessary to dispute whether this excess be half a million, or a million: whatever the surplus may be reckoned, and to whatever the cause be assigned, that excess in the number of inhabitants *must* have plain bread and warm clothing found them, if we are unable to give them immediate labor where-

with to earn the same; since we cannot perform what Polyphemus is said to have done with Ulysses and his companions in the cavern of a desert isle, select the fattest or the leanest, in order to sacrifice them. From the king to the peasant, each has embarked his all, in the same venture, and we must sink or swim together.

To wave all farther preface, I proceed to consider the bill now submitted to parliament by Mr. Scarlett, and supported by Sir J. Graham, Sir J. Sebright, Colonel Wood, Mr. Davenport, &c.

Mr. Scarlett, if I mistake not, says, in substance at least, that the present Poors' Rate and Poor Laws offer a premium for Pauperism, and deteriorate landed property from 40 to 60, and sometimes as much as 100 per cent., without any equivalent advantage; that they demoralize and injure the poor man, by holding out a fallacious hope of support, and inducing him thereby to eat the bread of idleness, rather than to depend on the strength of his own arm, his own exertions, industry, sobriety, and frugality.

To go a little back into the history of these Poor Laws, I may observe, that by the 5th and 14th of Elizabeth, assessments for charitable purposes were at first *recommended* by the English government to each town and parish, and such is

the consequence of uncontrouled and undue power, that in a very short period, these simple *requests* were converted into *orders;* and the government of a country legislating on that which should be left to itself, and of which it can never be sufficiently informed, enforced, by law, that which was hitherto only a moral and private duty. Badges were instituted; workhouses were built, apparently to encourage the industrious, but, in reality, to protect the idle; and a variety of laws were subsequently framed to meet the still growing evil.

But these laws, so humanely intended, operate against the interest of the poor man, by confining him to his parish, and depressing the farmer or landholder. So very useless is this tax, and so wretched its disposition, that Mr. Fielding, an accurate observer of human nature, said, "it was a question whether the rich or the poor are actually more dissatisfied, the plunder of the one serving so little to the real advantage of the other." It is opposed to the first principle of human government and human nature, that "Man shall get bread by the sweat of his brow;" it encourages idleness and drunkenness; a profuse instead of an economical expenditure; it leads to vicious habits and imaginary wants; improvident marriages, and an excessive population, without the means of supporting them; offering also "a striking para-

dox, of each parish regarding the poor of all other places as *aliens;* and anxious alone to banish them their society; so that, while millions are expended in their relief, millions of poor stand, by this system, in need of more relief than they can possibly receive."*

Thus, according to another writer, Mr. Townsend, "the Poor Laws, so beautiful in theory, promote the evils they were intended to relieve; being not only unjust, oppressive, and impolitic, but bordering upon absurdity, because they say, that no man, even by his indolence, improvidence, prodigality, and vice, shall suffer want."

The question now is—What remedy can be proposed to stay this growing evil in its course;—one that threatens to overwhelm the landed interests of this wealthy country,—to realize the frightful theory of some of those enthusiastic republicans of the last century, of an equality of rights and property.

† "The frame of society would not hold together, without the protection of property;"—and as well might we propose, that each man should have an equal proportion of talent and assiduity, of vice and virtue, of strength and weakness, as

* Ruggles' Hist. of the Poor. † Lord Sidmouth.

that the provident and improvident, the temperate and intemperate, should share alike the goods of fortune.

Such sentimental language would only suit the distempered, desperate, mind of one who, having forfeited his own personal independance by profuse expenditure, or at the gambling table, wishes also to stake that of his family, his friends, and, lastly, his country.

But to return to the subject:—What remedy can be proposed to relieve the Aged and the Imbecile (securing to them every reasonable comfort;) and at the same time, to repress the young, the idle, and drunken peasant from throwing himself out of work, and sharing that pittance which was intended originally for worthier objects; in short, to induce him, by gentle means, rather than by the fear of imprisonment and correction;—by an appeal to the first and most generous of our feelings, Human Pride and Human Shame, rather than to coercive enactments of the law—the arm of magistracy, the scourge, or terrors of a jail;—to become a frugal, sober, and industrious husbandman, rather than a street-pauper; bullying and insulting the village overseer—lounging or yawning at each corner of the market place; and, for want of better employment, making game of every one that passes by?

Mr. Scarlett's present bill, before the House of Commons, proposes:

1st.—A total abolition of the law for removing the poor to their settlements: in this he agrees with some of the ablest and most intelligent men who have considered the subject; and it appears reasonable, that the law of settlement should be so far abrogated, as to secure to the *poorest* Englishman, what the poor seem to enjoy in every other part of the world but England, his natural right,—I would say, his birthright,—of earning his bread where he is best able to do it. No one, I believe, would hesitate in granting this boon, if boon it can be called, were any means devised of protecting particular towns or parishes from pressure and distress, in consequence of such freedom of settlement and choice of removal:—but of this more hereafter.

2nd.—Mr. Scarlett's proposed bill is to give relief to the Aged and Indigent, and *none* (if I understand him right) to the young and healthy labourer or artisan; or, if any exception be made, it is limited to those who are married previous to passing the said act.

Upon this article, the fate of the bill hinges; and I do not hesitate to say, that however good in principle it be; however justifiable in law, in

equity, and reason; and whatever may be the expected beneficial results attending the same—to private property and public morals; it is not—cannot be, expedient to adopt a measure that makes every one tremble for its consequences.

Were I to urge an objection, to that which I approve of in principle, I should observe, that, where there is any acknowledged excess of population in the country, or in any particular part of it, to the quantum of labor, which can possibly be provided; some intermediate course must be taken, some mode adopted, of offering employment, either private or public, or a bare subsistence given to those who otherwise must starve.

Hunger will break through Stone Walls:

and that half a million, or a million of men, should sit with their arms before them, and submit to this undeserved fate, is not in the least probable. Previous therefore to the adoption of this strong measure, it is absolutely necessary, that some depôt of grain, with magazines of clothing, and barracks for shelter, be previously established in each county, for their support; some public work begun, or war commenced; some easy and economical means of emigration adopted; something to ease the body-politic of that excess which palsies the morals and energy of one of the most fertile countries of the globe, and at present certainly the richest.

This evil, or, if I may call it so,—this disease, after a growth of two centuries, is arrived at such a height, and has assumed so morbid and frightful an appearance, that it requires the skilful scientific hand of an Astley Cooper, to probe it to the bottom; to compress it gently, firmly, and nearly in the same gradual manner that it arose;—to separate the sounder from the more diseased parts, and, finally, to effect a wholesome, perfect cure.

Where such multiplied difficulties intervene, it may appear presumptuous in any individu[illegible] and more especially in an unknown one, to suggest a mode of relief; but, if this principle actuates all, the very contemplation of relief must be given up.

It is an easy task to form objections to every suggested mode of mutually relieving the *public* and the *poor*: to me it appears, that the simplest means are the best,* and such as occur from a consideration of the subject I shall briefly detail.

The idea of establishing a set of works in each county, in order to draw off the surplus population of each town and village, appears alike expensive in the outset, and difficult in the execution, if not, indeed, preposterous; since, like many charitable

* Vide David Hume and Adam Smith's Works.

funds, it would only increase the evil it was intended to check. And, again—any proposal made to the legislature, to prohibit or discountenance imprudent marriages among the lower classes of the community, savours much more of theory, than of any useful or practical result; for, who ever asks a famished beggar, or a pauper, whether he be legitimate or illegitimate?—and, strange as it may sound, it is no less true, that the law, as it now stands, gives more assistance to the mother of a bastard child, than to the mother of one born in wedlock.

The same remark applies to an attempt being made "to punish those, who would not labor, and those who wish to travel in vagrancy:" theoretically, it is good and wholesome; but the attempt appears to have been fruitless, from the time of Queen Elizabeth, to the present day; witness those *nominal Workhouses*, built and instituted for the purpose of *compelling* the young and idle to industry.—What are they at this day? Witness those neglected acts of parliament, running through each reign, during the last 200 years; as if the legislature of this country, or as if despotism itself, could enforce that which nature, habit, and self-interest, can alone direct to useful purposes. The system of coercing and legislating for that which should be free as the winds that blow, appears a leading feature of the present day;—it is, what

Oliver Goldsmith said of Edmund Burke, "like cutting blocks with a razor;" and as well might the legislature pretend to check the evils arising in every family from the misconduct of, or want of prudence in, each individual composing it, as attempt to punish those who, to use a common soldier's expression, sham Abraham and will not labor.

I am very little acquainted with Mr. Owen's plans at Lanark, for ameliorating the condition of the poor of his own neighbourhood, and, as he assures us, that of the world at large;—whether he be, or be not, liable to the imputation of a Theorist, I cannot take upon me to assert: but in one sentiment I fully coincide with him, when he says: "that every attempt to relieve the poor, or improve their condition, except through their own labor, judiciously applied, must prove abortive."

The Labourer is worthy of his hire;

and, where competition is free, he will always meet with his reward."

"The charities of life" are best directed and administered by private hands; for, when the state prescribes, enacts, enforces, it fixes relief upon the idle, profligate and unworthy object, as well as upon the really worthy and necessitous.

Having taken the liberty of stating, what ap-

pears objectionable in the plans and suggestions of others, and cursorily run over the subject, I come to that, which has employed the heads and hearts of so many writers, now dead;—and, among the rest, I may be excused particularizing a short tract, containing some useful hints, addressed to the public, and written by my late revered father, about 30 years ago.

The remedy, that I would humbly suggest, is four-fold.

1. As it concerns the Settlement of the poor.

2. Their Diet.

3. Their Clothing.

4. Their Lodging:—and, beside these, I know no other circumstance, that, in the present state of the case, calls for the aid of parliament; and even this assistance, on the part of government, should, in a great degree, be limited to abrogating and annulling all their former harsher and coercive acts, and sanctioning, with the full and entire approbation of the constituent legislature, such gentler measures of controuling the lazy and profligate youth, the incorrigible drunkard, the voluntary and determined pauper; those, who now claim a portion of that pittance, which was first intend-

ed for, and ought to be exclusively appropriated to, the aged and imbecile.

1st. As it regards settlement. I agree with Mr. Scarlett, that the poorest as well as the richest subject of the British realm, should enjoy his natural birth-right, "of earning his bread where he is best able to do it;"—a liberty that is not denied in any other state, despotic or free, that I know of, except it be to the Russian boor;—and if any part of the law of settlement be retained, let it be strictly limited to the support of the *aged*, who are past, or nearly past, their work; or to the diseased and sickly patient, incapable of *labor;* and these two denominations alone, were it thought proper, might be passed on, either to their native country or parish, for support, or to that town or village which had benefited by their useful industry, or their skilful exertions, for a certain course of years. This would be received as a boon by the people at large, and satisfy at least the industrious part, that their wishes and interests had been consulted in that which most concerns them.

2d. and 3d. I would class together diet and clothing, since these appear to be the most difficult of arrangement; and upon this question hangs the fate of every attempt to alter, to modify, or to abrogate, the present Poor Laws.

It is almost unnecessary to state, that the dis-

eased, the imbecile, and more especially the honest labouring and aged pauper, or, to use a kinder, although not a legal or forensic term, the aged *poor man*, should have every possible comfort found him; whether in his own cottage or lodging, or in any house or range of building, set apart, by consent of the public, for this purpose.

Instead of 3s. or 3s. 6d., the present customary weekly allowance, for finding him in clothes, in meat, in beer, and every other article he requires, let it be increased, if necessary, so that he may have no reasonable cause of reproach to that country in whose bosom he was reared, and to whose support he has given his bodily strength and vital energy.—Thank God! my native country is able to afford this expense, without feeling it as a burden; and no landholder, householder, or farmer, would grudge it to this honest and useful class of people; nay, more—I will assert, from my personal knowledge and experience, that the *former* would be glad to anticipate the wants of the *latter*.

Upon this head, therefore, that of supporting the aged and the impotent of mind or body, who merit every care, there can be but one opinion. It is to the youthful Pauper alone, who, sunk in sloth or drunkenness, instead of seeking for work, daily besets the overseer for bread, or clothes, or

money—that I would apply the slightest severity; and even that degree of it should be unaccompanied with any terror of the law, or frightful jail; —for neither judge, nor justice, nor constable, nor petty officer, should interfere, and no other appeal should be made, but to their pride and manly shame—the unbought, natural feelings of humanity.

As I said before, let them range, in pursuit of labor and an honest livelihood, from the Land's End to the house called John o' Groat's; in short, let their energy be unshackled, and there can be but little fear of the really industrious man or woman earning a decent livelihood; or, that the numbers, unprovided with labor, compared to what they are under the present system of restriction and confinement, will, in a short time, be extremely small.

Even the idle, the determined, or the drunken Pauper I would not shut out from subsistence,—he should not starve, although he will not work unless he have a servant, dignified with the title of overseer, to pry into every farm-yard, every nook and corner of the parish, whatever may be its size, to find out for him his daily work; or, failing in this, to feed, to clothe, and find lodging for him, in his idleness.

I repeat it, no! he should not, abject as he is, altogether starve;—he should eat, if he insisted upon it, the bread of idleness, but not without some regret, or (as he now does) without the slightest compunction or shame; it should be bread—wholesome in its material, and capable of sustaining him in labor, but of the very coarsest kind, and of the coarsest grain: such as barley and wheat, in equal proportion, and made into bannocks, or loaves of bread;—the wheat being ground down *hard* and entire into meal, and the barley having the bran alone taken out of it: or oaten cake;—or bread made of barley alone;—or barley and pease, such as is used by rich and poor in the low lands of Scotland, may be substituted:—this, and water, should be his daily diet.

'If it is objected, as it will be, no doubt, by some of delicate and nervous feelings, that the option is a hard one;—that at its commencement it may fall severely on some particular individuals or families in each town and village; I acknowledge at once, that in the beginning it may do so, but that this slight inconvenience would very soon find its own remedy, since an industrious master of a family having a sure resort, and such as would satisfy an honest person in distress, would soon, very soon, relieve himself and family from the necessity of applying for relief of any kind.

1st. By receiving, as he would from the farmer, the artisan, and the trader, his full and fair proportion of wages, instead of having it cut down to almost nothing, and imperfectly supplied, or made up to him, from the parish rate.

2dly. The relief it would instantaneously afford to every one engaged in agriculture, or in trade, and enable him, as well as the gentleman, or rich landed proprietor, to execute little improvements and additional works, such as extra grubbing, ditching, making new water meadows, &c. &c. which his present poverty or pecuniary distress precludes him from undertaking.—Setting aside also what every country gentleman and every man of landed or other property has it within his immediate and daily power to remedy, by seeking out, and assisting with little loans or gifts of money, food, medicine, or clothes, such as he knew to be deserving of such aid—for, base, grovelling, and self-interested, as I know some individuals to be, I cannot believe, under such circumstances of cheering hope to all, whether in the higher, the middling, or the lower classes; such peculiar advantages to each individual, as the immediate and almost entire abolition of the burthen of the poor rates offers; but that such deserving objects would most readily and personally be sought for within the immediate pale and circle of their influence; and amply, nay more generously, relieved.

These charities may be *recommended* from the pulpit and the press, and, even as before, by the statute of the realm; by individual philanthropists of every rank and degree;—let also the wealthy and liberal citizen, unknowing of, and unknown to, his next-door neighbour, with his characteristic goodness of heart, zealously press forward, and shelter the widow and the orphan, the really honest and industrious labourer or artizan, pressed down by his large and sickly family; it is a theme that might suit the genius of a Massillon, or a Howard: but, as I said before, these charitable donations must not be *legislated* nor *enforced* in any way whatever; for, if they are, from that moment, such is human nature, every tie and feeling of gratitude is dissipated on one side, and every desire of giving or relieving forfeited on the other.

As for Clothes—If he insisted upon receiving any of the parish or of the public, as a charitable donation, on the plea, whether true or false, that he was not hungry, (since this complaint had been thus obviated) but naked, and, as he might quaintly say, exposed to the wintry wind of heaven; let him be clad,—warmly clad, with a jacket, shirt, and trowsers, of a particular colour, quality, and make; regularly numbered and marked at every point, and from head to foot, with the words, *Parish Pauper, Overton*, or whatever might be the

name of his residence. Let his own clothes be taken from him by the overseer, carefully washed and locked up, for the purpose of being delivered up when he chose to resume them, and resign his claim to the parish uniform.

If medicine be required for the pauper, let it be given rather than *money;* and for any additional comforts required by a large family, arising from some peculiar loss or misfortune, let them be taught to be a little provident, and to depend on those little resources every individual has the command of at some period or other; to lay up in summer what will assist them through the winter, to rely rather on their own personal exertions; or, if any charitable fund must be looked to, let it be the mite,—the alms of the neighbouring farmers or gentry in the country, who, from long residence and acquaintance with their character, can best relieve their wants: or, if in any town or city where the middling and inferior classes are less known to each other, let those charitable institutions, supported by private donations or subscriptions, such as are known in London, Edinburg, Paris, and in other places, under the various names of Hospital, Hotel de Dieu, &c. be established, or continued, to meet the wants of those who are recommended.

A want of generosity or charity is by no means

characteristic of the *English* nation; and, if the public are but relieved of that which they ought not to bear;—the support of every idle person who chuses to make himself, or family, paupers, for the sake of forcing the overseer, or persuading the magistrate, to pay for his lodging, his shoemaker's or his tailor's bill;—I feel confident, that every one possessed of property would voluntarily and liberally come forward to aid those among his poorer fellow creatures, who really require their assistance beyond their own means.—By these changes, and perhaps by these alone, can

> " Whining Sloth, a vicious cheat,
> Be forced to work before it eat."

And so true is Mr. Owen's remark before quoted, that every attempt to relieve the poor, except through their own labour judiciously applied, must prove abortive.

At present, the system of poor laws encourages, instead of repressing, the common sentiment among the labouring classes, that the parish rate is his constant resource in every difficulty, real or imagined;—in short, his freehold, upon which he may draw at pleasure; or, as some call it, " the king's donation."

The idea of its being a charity does not enter

their heads; and, if the poor, books of Overton be referred to, a number of drones may be remarked, that ought to be turned out, such as L——ve, C—r, and uncle Dick, who literally will not work, because they can, by law, eat without it; and farther, when employment is found for them as gardener or labourer in some respectable house, these men have been known to throw themselves out of work, and to take, in preference and in defiance of every one, the pauper's bread: in a late instance, indeed, one of these worthless creatures went before a magistrate, and fearlessly avowed a theft he had committed, claiming, at the same time, exemption to any part of his bread from the parish being deducted from him, on account of the sum thus stolen, or made away with.

This man is one among several, to use a moderate expression, in this neighbourhood, who might be adduced as a proof of the accuracy of Mr. Scarlett's remark, that the minds of the people are demoralized to a degree which is quite hideous, and that chiefly, if not entirely, by the poor laws.

Another, although trivial instance, and I have done. Dame A. has worked for me two years; she is honest and industrious, but not easily satisfied; her weekly earnings, independent of

board, are from 3s. to 3s. 6d. Her husband, also, works as a labourer; and having no dependent family, these two people are as well able to support themselves, as any family in the kingdom. But Dame A. looks around, and says, "if my neighbours get relief, why should I not have it also?" She applies accordingly to the overseer, and by giving up half a day's work to forwarding this object;—she obliges the overseer, to give to herself and her husband £2 in payment of cottage rent; which sum her master (as her husband is called) spends for her at the alehouse.

If it be objected that the preceding plan, although considerate to the aged and helpless, deals hardly to the robust and labouring man and woman, I will acknowledge that it does so in appearance, but not in reality. I may be pardoned citing another well known adage—

"That we should not look a gift horse in the mouth."

And when a man condescends to ask for and eat the bread of others, he really ought to be better satisfied with the brownest, coarsest, household bread, and good water, such as is capable of staying him at hard labor, than with the whitest French loaf doled out to him in charity.

It is, I believe, self-evident, that by this system

of controul, that fraudulent abuse of a charity, which impoverishes the landholder without comfort or satisfaction to the poor man; (a charity, that in point of magnitude is unheard of in the annals of history, since it exceeds eight millions sterling per annum); would dwindle comparatively to nothing: and the landholder, the farmer, and the artisan, being relieved within the short period of one or two years of so grievous a burden, would be able, by a variety of little expedients and improvements which his present poverty represses, to give much more employment to those who sought labor; and willingly, no doubt most willingly, to assist the present idle pauper to resume those industrious habits,—that care, foresight, and frugality, he never would have lost sight of, but for the institution of the present absurd and vicious system of providing a refuge and a resort, equally for the provident and improvident, the worthless drone, the drunkard, the loitering village thief, alike with the honest and industrious labourer; or, I might say, rather in favour of the *former*, and against the *latter*.

If the above plan of gently urging or coercing a young person to labour for his own benefit be deemed severe,—if coarse and wholesome bread, with good water, be not sufficient; let those who can pity and sympathise with the idle or drunken pauper, devise any possible mode by which he

can be reclaimed. The professional beggar and common pauper are actuated by the same principle,—the hope of living in idleness, or of indulging in strong beer and spirits; and were the poor rates of each parish doubled, the demand would still exceed that of the appropriated sum.

On the other hand, let this plan be contrasted with any other more sudden change proposed for practical adoption; it offers, to say the least of it, no chilling view of starvation,—no contrast between those men who are married this year, or ten or twenty years ago: the aged and sickly pauper alone (whose case should be accompanied by a surgeon's certificate, and previously subjected to the inspection of a select or other vestry,) could claim by law, not money, (for this should be carefully and invariably withheld,) but, that decent, comfortable, and ample provision in household bread, meat, beer, clothes, and linen, which his or her situation requires. The sturdy pauper, on the other hand, knowing that he has a resort in every place, although a very moderate one, for subsistence in idleness, and that every bar to removal or settlement was thrown down, would very soon find out where his true interest lay; and, when marriage was contemplated, instead of squandering every penny he gains at the village alehouse, it would probably be deposited

in one of the saving banks or box clubs, for the future support of himself, his wife, and family.

The pulse beats high, and the heart throbs with unutterable delight, in contemplating this scene prospectively; for the scheme is neither visionary nor impracticable, but has already been realized on a small scale. The machinery is so simple that it would work of itself; it requires no farther assistance than that the wheels should not be clogged by *sympathising* speculatists, nor change allowed by any corporation, vestry, magistrate, or petty officer; and where any charitable funds are at the disposal of the public, let them come in aid of this arrangement, but let them also be put or continued entirely apart by themselves, and appropriated according to the donors or subscribers' desire; such, for instance, as private almshouses, hospitals erected in town or country for the poorer classes, or any similar establisment.

Were I to ask any boon on the part of the poor, from government, in aid of this plan, it should, instead of a grant of money, be confined to the putting down that swarm of alehouses in every town and village, that deprave and impoverish the poor classes and infest the neighbourhood; and, as in the case of the window tax, to relieve the cottager from payment of any government tax upon the insurance of his little tenement.

Of all the proposed changes, this is the only part which appears like theory, or in the least doubtful of success; since I am aware of the difficulty of inducing the Chancellor of the Exchequer, amidst all his cares and public wants, to resign any portion of so productive a branch of revenue, to allow of, and even to encourage, a diminution of expenditure of strong beer and spirits in the town or village alehouse.

But if this plan should be adopted, and found to answer in all its bearings, the general and immediate advantage resulting to every branch of internal trade, to agriculture, and external commerce—is such, that looking to the question as one of revenue, and in a mere pecuniary point of view, I should hope he would find the latter rather improved than injured by affording every facility to it.

Again, the only other difficulty I contemplate, is that arising from a certain class of manufacturers and professional men, to whom the present system of poor rates yields a ready, and, I fear, too ample a resource; and thus situated, a bias must naturally be given to that which affords a present return to themselves and families: for, generally speaking, it is not in human nature to do or act otherwise; and few take the trouble of looking at the future, provided the present offers a sunny and

agreeable prospect. I merely glance at the possibility of such opposition, and by no means with the intention of saying any thing unpleasant to the personal feelings of any respectable body of men.

I have already stated the probable objections of some men of *more nervous feeling* than others, to any sort of apparent, though not of real hardship, that might, or, to speak plain, probably would fall on particular individuals and families, in being obliged to have resort to wholesome brown bread, (half wheat, half barley,) when out of work at particular seasons, and to rely upon their own prudence for any other comfort: the same remark applies to clothing, and not allowing any individual pauper to *drive* at the overseer and compel him, without restriction, as they now do, to clothe him or her from head to foot; to give them stockings and shoes, and whenever those shoes want nailing, to hob them; with a long list of extra charges; on account, equally, or I might say more, of the idle and slovenly, than the industrious and careful labourer.

When this takes place, is there any reason for surprise at the middling classes of tradesmen, or the small farmer, who is one remove above the labourer or artizan, being weighed down by so unjust, so unfeeling a law, as that which takes

from *his hard earnings*, to bestow it, through a careless magistrate, or an improvident overseer, upon some of the most worthless objects of charity that can present themselves. The present case is so far desperate, that property in land and houses is taxed, in some places, from fifty to one hundred per cent.—If any temporary change for the better takes place, it arises not from the law, or any new enactment of the law, for that lies dormant and torpid to any beneficial result; but from the interference of some active magistrate, or honest pains-taking overseer; and even those limited exertions for the public good are constantly thwarted by the supineness, the ignorance, and not unfrequently, by the prejudices and some little interested motives of others acting in the same situation. At present, the parish purse is the magistrate's; he looks upon it as such, and it is so by law: as a necessary consequence it follows, that he is generous before he is just, since even the select parish vestry has no power to resist him, and *every case* that comes before him is one of *urgent* necessity. Under these circumstances, where the germ of the system is so laid in error; when the evil has arisen to such a magnitude, as to affect the feelings and principles of the rich, as well as of the poor, in their mutual jealousy and dislike of each other; where the landed proprietor is distressed to the utmost, by a peasantry that, generally

speaking, instead of being surly, independent, and proud, (the English characteristic in former days,) are taught, by the existing poor laws, to be obsequious, hypocritical, and beggarly—when the pauper is allowed to blind, to humbug, if I may use so coarse a term, and to convert the fund, destined by a good, but misjudging, princess, to the relief of the aged and industrious; into a joint and nominal freehold, for every one, needy or otherwise, not possessed of sufficient pride to reject it;—I repeat it, under such circumstances, when the vessel of the state is strained beyond her natural bearing, and that by a continuance and consequent increase of this vicious system, even her safety is despaired of, no reasonable man can say that a port for shelter can immediately be gained, without some little buffeting of the waves, some slight and temporary inconvenience to the individuals embarked. According to a Roman proverb,* "the public good is the supreme law," and if we must choose between a greater and a smaller evil, surely no one can hesitate a moment in the choice.

The idle, dissolute, and drunken pauper, I put out of the question; it is only the few, willing, industrious, hard-working artisans or labourers, and their families, who cannot, after *every exertion*,

* Salus populi suprema lex.

find labor, for whom we can sympathise at the outset; and those farmers and gentlemen of large landed property, who would *so benefit* by a change of system, and save, by it, tens and hundreds of pounds per annum, could not grudge laying out *voluntarily* a tythe, or some small part of it, in assisting those whom they have perhaps known from childhood. A garment, warm and suitable for the inclemency of winter, but *well marked*, as a pauper's uniform should be, is demanded of the overseer, and given; if the pauper dislikes it, let him put by a part of his summer gains, and decline it; let him go to the farmer, to his master, or his landlord, and say, "You have known me for years—I am not hungry, for I have, even in idleness, a sure resource; nor can I say I am pinched by the season, since this garment will protect me; but I am ashamed of this *colour*, these pauper's *badges*, and if you will assist me with either a small loan, or gift, I shall avoid this disgrace, and will repay you thankfully."—That there are men—aye, rich men, who might turn a deaf ear to this humble petition, is very possible, but not probable: there is no general rule, without some exception; and I am convinced, by past experience, our only guide for the present and the future, that there are few—very few English hearts, who would not gladly, under such circumstances, assist their fellow creature, and their countryman, with a few shillings. Infuse but this principle of

independence and surly pride, into a portion of the population, and it would soon become general; and, after a short period, no other part of the poor laws would remain, but such as were originally instituted by Queen Elizabeth to support the aged and such as were utterly incapable of labor.

4th. Lodging. This is the last article I have to discuss, and it is comparatively easy; for if settlement be thrown open to the young and healthy, with a bare sustenance, but sufficient to obviate absolute distress, under every possible contingency and situation; and, on the other hand, an ample, comfortable provision be extended to such as are beyond labor, either from disease or age, then does the last subject I have to consider, namely, lodging, offer but little difficulty, since the aged pauper, whose useful life has been passed in serving the community at large, is provided for, and the idle one is forced out of his strong hold.

If possible, I would have it written in golden letters, over the door of every alms-house, or charitable endowment,

That Money should invariably be withheld;

since this species of donation opens such a field to the artful and rapacious designs of interested and unprincipled men, and offers such temptation even

to those of fairer character, that in practice it is and must always be liable to abuse; and the Hesperian boughs, watched even by an Argus, would require other guards, to save them from being made away with, or perverted.

What I recommend is, that no aid in money, however partial, or small in amount, be given on account of lodging, or, indeed, on any plea whatever.

I hardly need repeat, that the aged or other pauper, incapable of labor, should be as warmly and comfortably lodged, as good shelter, beds, and clean linen, can make them, in those houses already built and denominated Work-houses, but which, in this case, might be called Public Alms-houses.

For the young pauper of either sex, or of any age, let a plain range, or ranges, as may be required, of semi-circular building, be erected near the outskirts of each town or village; each range enclosed by a wall or high fence, containing twelve suits, of two small but airy and rather lofty, bed rooms, of 6 by 8 ft. each, in dimension, and 8 ft. in height; one sitting room in front; giving altogether thirty-six rooms in each distinct range, and capable of accommodating twelve large families, or forty-eight unmarried paupers

and children; allowing in the latter case four individuals, upon average, to the two bed-rooms, with a sitting room for their joint accommodation, during the day.

This proportion of inhabitants would combine cleanliness and health with decency; and if I may suggest a plan, uniting the utmost order among the resident paupers, and the strictest economy, without parsimony, in the expense of erecting such range of building, or any additional number, it should be according to the rough sketches, marked in the Appendix A. Nos. 1, 2, 3, viz.—

For 12 large Families, or 48 unmarried Paupers or Children.					No. 1.
24	„	96	„	„	No. 2.
36	„	144	„	„	No. 3.
48	„	192	„	„	No. 3.

The latter forming a square enclosure, without farther expense for wall or wooden fence; and each range, as indicated by a dotted line in No. 1. or additional section, for encreasing numbers, marked in No. 2. being capable of enclosure, by merely running a connecting fence or wall, from the one to the other.

The furniture to be used in each suit or set of three rooms, should be the fewest in number possible, the strongest, most durable and cleanly;

such as a small fire-place, with common grate or the hearth itself, an iron bed-stead, with wooden planks, instead of sacking, to support a straw bed, made of the coarsest and cheapest stuff; and a single or double blanket, two or three strong stools, but no chairs.

The sort of building here proposed, is perhaps the cheapest that can be devised; and, being really roomy and comfortable, compared to what accommodation many cottagers have without, a sufficient check must be applied to prevent its abuse; and no better means offer than appointing a porter, warden, or master of each lodge, with one set of rooms for his own residence; and there being only one outlet or gateway, a regulation must be laid down, and invariably observed, of shutting and opening the same, at some fixed hour—say five in the morning, and nine in the evening, for summer; and six in the morning and seven in the evening, for winter; and every pauper inhabitant not conforming to this single, wholesome, and necessary regulation, must be invariably shut out for the night; and in case of absence from the lodge, for a longer period, of one two, or three, or four weeks, then his or her name and right to such place of residence to be annulled.

One word more with respect to clothing:—If,

as has been said, the delicacy of some Paupers, who accept parish relief in the form of charity clothes, has its weight in preventing the adoption of any distinguishing badge or dress, why is not the same effect produced on charity boys and girls, who have a cap and garment that sufficiently denotes to whom they are indebted? If such nice feelings really exist, why not insist on their looking for relief to some Dorcas or other friendly and humane private society, which dispenses clothes at half price to such as are known by their industrious habits and frugal character? I repeat it, that a want of generosity, or of a desire to succour and shield distressed honesty, is not characteristic of English men or women; then why, I may ask, legislate those charities that would be most ample, if not forced into bearing, and induce those who need not relief to assume the piteous plaint of misery and want?

Judging theoretically, would it be credited, that all the foundations, hospitals, private almshouses, donations, subscriptions, Dorcas and other societies, almost innumerable, added to eight millions of pounds sterling, in coercive rates, are insufficient to relieve the needy part of so small a population as England and Wales contains?

The fact is, that indiscriminate public charities encrease the evil they are intended to put down;

and, as said before, were the Poors' Rate and other private endowments *doubled* this year, it would, in a very short time, be still more insufficient than it now is to meet the growing demand —for, to use a homely but apt simile of Poor Richard—always taking out of the meal tub, and never putting in, will soon come to the bottom.

On the other hand, if those persons who are fearful of adopting any decisive remedy, lest the vessel of the state should be endangered, think the plan suggested in this tract should not, however beneficial the proposed result, be introduced too suddenly, then let its simple means of encouraging the poorer and relieving the richer classes be unfolded by degrees, and, if necessary, assisted by some private monied fund to supply in each parish *hard* labor, whether productive or unproductive, to those who wish to live and work, rather than, as at present, wear life away in eating the bread of idleness.

SUPPLEMENTARY REMARKS.



I HAVE said, that the plan here detailed was neither visionary nor impracticable, but had on a small scale been realized. I trust, that the two circumstances I have to state will bear me out: the one as it relates to diet and lodging, coming as it has done lately within my personal knowledge; the other, as it regards clothing and badges, having been not only recommended by almost every statute and treatise on the Poor Laws, since the days of Elizabeth, but partly carried into practice in the parish of St. John's of Wapping, and possibly in some other places I am not informed of.

Having brought my short sketch of Pauperism to a conclusion, it only remains for me to explain the simple facts as connected with the preceding assertions, and to state my reason for writing on this subject, and submitting it to public notice.

During my abode for the last two years, near the small town of Overton in Hants, my place of residence was regularly visited by a succession of tramps and beggars, who either found their way to Court House, from its commanding situation, or, as I afterwards found out, they were very frequently sent up, by some of the town's-people, in order to rid themselves of their importunity.

The succession of these tramps, consisting chiefly of professional beggars, was so constant, from Overton being situate on the high western road from London towards Andover, Salisbury, and Exeter, that I soon discovered the more I fed on bread and cheese, or meat, with perhaps half a pint of table beer, and the more halfpence and sixpences I laid out, the number was rather increasing than otherwise; although, by hearing their tale of woe, I frequently attempted to discriminate. When my pity was most excited, by their appearance of squalid poverty and wretchedness, I was often the most grossly deceived, since I do not know, that I ever gave a piece of silver to any of these apparently distressed objects, whether under the respectable name of merchant, tradesman, broken-down sailor, soldier, surgeon, or other profession, and could trace the steps of the person so relieved either to my neighbour's door, or to the neighbouring alehouses, but I heard of some excess, some scene

of riot, waste, and drunkenness; such as obliged me, however well inclined to relieve misery and honesty in its distress, to turn a deaf ear to their complaint.

This was precisely the state in which I was placed last August and September, when a quantity of common sea biscuit was sent from Southampton for my own use.—Some beggars I turned away on account of their healthy and robust appearance, others I still continued to relieve either with halfpence or the seaman's coarse biscuit, varying the trial according to the object daily and almost hourly presenting itself; for, as I said before, some of my neighbours, *nolens volens*, passed them on to Court House.

On one occasion, I tried a schoolmaster, or one, at least, calling himself so; and presenting him with some of the same bread and butter and honey, which I had myself been eating for breakfast, I saw the great dissatisfaction expressed in his countenance, upon receiving this aid instead of money;—money, in short, appeared to be the sole object of desire, and money I determined to refuse.

The last person (and I really hope it will be the last) who took me in, was a young *Portuguese gentleman*, well dressed, with a good address, and

speaking French fluently.—His tale was most plausible; he had been wild, and run away from his father—was then on his way to Plymouth, to embark for Lisbon; and his pocket being low, required a little assistance on the way; at the same time, using the name of a respectable gentleman of my acquaintance at Basingstoke, who very kindly assisted him. My reply was, that I made it a rule never to give money: this he heard with equal modesty and propriety, and I then added—"Should I make any exception, it is in the case of a stranger; and, if a shilling will be of service, you are welcome to it." The following day I heard of my Portuguese gentleman drunk at Dean Gate, on the road to London, instead of Plymouth. This and other numerous trials fortified me against ever attempting to *discriminate* again.

The consequence was, that I made a batch of barley bread and oaten cakes, of the best barley and oats I could procure of a neighbouring farmer, Mr. Joseph Crimble;—this was entrusted to my housekeeper, who made them as good as it was possible.

A hand bill* was printed, and the town's-people were told that I had accepted their *indirect* nomi

* Vide Appendix C.

nation to the post of almoner to Overton;—and that, in lieu of taking exception at the tramps being sent to Court House, it was my particular request that they would shut their own purse-strings—part with no pence or halfpence,—but answer every begging application, by a reference, if hungry, to Court House, which stands only 400 yards out of the town.

Many laughed at this singular idea; and some remonstrated, in a friendly way, that the undertaking to feed such a numerous tribe of Mendicants as were on the western road, on the plainest fare, was hazardous, and really too much for any individual, possessing only a moderate independency of fortune, to beg.

'My reply was, that the experiment was progressive, and, having by slow degree felt my way, I was determined to proceed with it; that I had a good neighbour in farmer Joseph Crimble to back me, and if the beggars did consume the produce of his large farm, and dip too deep into my purse, I should shortly, and without beat of drum, decamp. One month and a half's regular trial proved to myself and neighbours how needless was this apprehension.—It is true, I shall decamp, but not by stealth; since it is only from the necessity of rejoining my corps on foreign service.

Instead of having such frequent calls and piteous tales to listen to as during the preceding year and a half, the numbers gradually diminished, and my doors could be left occasionally open without fear of the common tramp.

The barley bannock and oaten cake at *Court House* became well known to all the tribe of Mendicants on the high road ;—the honest needy man came and ate his meal with equal decency of conduct and thankfulness ;—the professional, ragged, and drunken beggar avoided the place as he would a pest house ; and I had, at last, the gratification of knowing, and Mr. Corrie, Mr. Troughton, and all my neighbours, were equally convinced, that by this means, and this alone, could I insure the pittance I gave, going to a needy object, rather than to one, who only begs because he can live in geater ease, both in diet and liquor, than he can obtain by labor at home.

The stated sums that professional tramps gain daily, are, in many instances, so great, that I am precluded from detailing them, upon mere report; but some more correct opinion may be formed, by watching them at their lodging houses in each town and village, where they not only squander their gains profusely, by indulgence in liquor, but waste the meat, bread, and food, which they obtain and carry off.

A more detailed account may be found in the Appendix, by which it will appear how this simple plan succeeded in keeping off the idle, worthless tramp; while the really needy traveller, whether sailor, soldier, or labouring man or woman, sat down and ate both heartily and thankfully; and occasionally, when an Irish, Welsh, or Scotch man or woman came to the door, and I could give them a sup of buttermilk with an oaten cake, they were better satisfied than the common tramp is with meat and strong beer.

I mentioned to some of the neighbouring and best informed farmers the necessity of some lodge or shed being appropriated to the use of the really necessitous traveller and beggar, in order to prevent the professional tramp from applying so constantly, and in such numbers, every evening to the overseers' door for twopence, threepence, and fourpence each, upon the strong plea, or rather the pretence, that without assistance to this extent, he must sleep in the street before the overseer's door or under a hedge; at the same time disturbing his family and the neighbourhood by execrations and curses upon any refusal.

To threaten such people with confinement, with all the consequent law expenses of sending them first to the magistrate with a constable, and then sixteen miles off to Winchester, was fruitless;

and knowing the impunity with which, from numbers and boldness, they could act, they succeeded accordingly in enforcing their daily demand.

The farmers and parishioners observed the advantage of the brown bread system, since they witnessed it personally; and, at my request, narrowly inspected it in all its bearings; and they also knew that by its operation alone the beggars' demands in this neighbourhood were greatly lessened.

A vestry was therefore called by joint consent, and a common lodge proposed; the parishioners came forward readily, and a plain building was ordered to be immediately erected near the workhouse, as noticed in Appendix, and at an expense of fifteen guineas; for, as they justly remarked, this money, instead of being lost, would, at the year's end, be saved to the parish exclusive of any other benefit.

On the 26th of June, another vestry was called, at my request, by the churchwardens and overseers. I mentioned the necessity of my quitting the country the middle of the next month to rejoin my corps on foreign service—that I had submitted to their daily inspection samples of the barley and oaten bread used to support the necessitous traveller or needy beggar, with its im-

mediate result;—that I now submitted also the hasty notes I had thrown together on this subject, relative both to number and character of the objects relieved;—that I could do no more: and it rested with the vestry and parishioners to say whether this recent experiment, so tried and approved for nearly two months, should drop altogether on my departure, or be continued for the sake of ridding the neighbourhood of the profligate and idle tramp, who, without deigning to look at the plain meal of bread proffered, passed on at once to Basingstoke or Whitchurch; and at the same time relieving those pennyless travellers who accepted with gratitude what enabled them to proceed on twelve or eighteen miles of their road, a brown bannock and a glass of water or buttermilk.

The vestry unanimously, and I may add the parish individually and generally, agreed to continue the same plan of relief, both as it regarded lodging and bread; and Mr. Jagoe, one of the overseers, voluntarily offered, upon my departure, to give out the latter; at the same time the vestry had the goodness to thank me for the benefit, they were pleased to say, I had done the parish and immediate neighbourhood. Although I told them, and told them truly, that the expense of this experiment upon this scale had to me been very trifling.

The only additional remark I have to make, regards the cost of the three different batches of barley and wheaten flour made into bannocks of twelve oz., or into loaves of fourteen oz. each;—for the detail of each batch I must refer to Appendix B., and content myself with stating that the batch of brown bread most approved, both for its good quality and cheapness, is the wheaten meal ground down, as the miller terms it, *hard;* that is, the entire wheat with its pollard and bran, (such as used by many respectable farmers in Kent,) and barley flour, without its bran, mixed in equal proportions.

Having considered this subject attentively during the last year, and been at leisure the last two months to form and digest this experiment upon a small scale, I am quite satisfied with its result, and that it might be equally practicable on the largest.

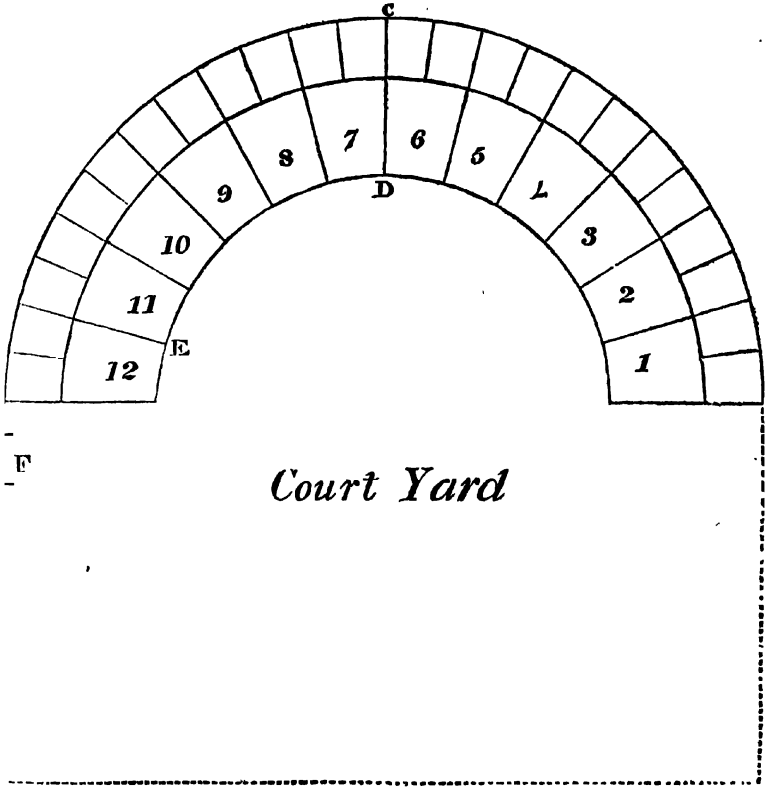
Upon my approaching departure from the country, I can do no more than state these particulars for public information, which I do at the express desire of some of my friends and neighbours; leaving it in the hands of those who have greater experience and much more information on the subject than myself.

I quit the country on a long and distant, if not perilous, journey, and now simply state the facts

and circumstances that formed the ground-work of my late experiment at Overton, as well as of the present Treatise on Pauperism; most sincerely wishing that the same plan may be extended far, far, beyond my own humble means; and conclude with a prayer, that the same may be found equally serviceable in removing the present threatening and growing evils of Mendicity and Pauperism throughout the kingdom.

APPENDIX A.

PLAN for the erection of a PAUPERS' LODGE for twelve Families, or forty-eight single Paupers or Children.—No. 1.



Entire length from A. to B. 100 feet, including outer walls.

Breadth of the building from C. to D. 22 feet.

Sitting Room, numbered 1, 2, 3, &c. dimension 14 ft. by 10, and a fraction.

Bed Room attached to ditto 8 ft. by 6.

One door to each set of apartments for 1 family, as for instance at E.

One ditto to each Bed Room, and communicating with the Sitting Room.

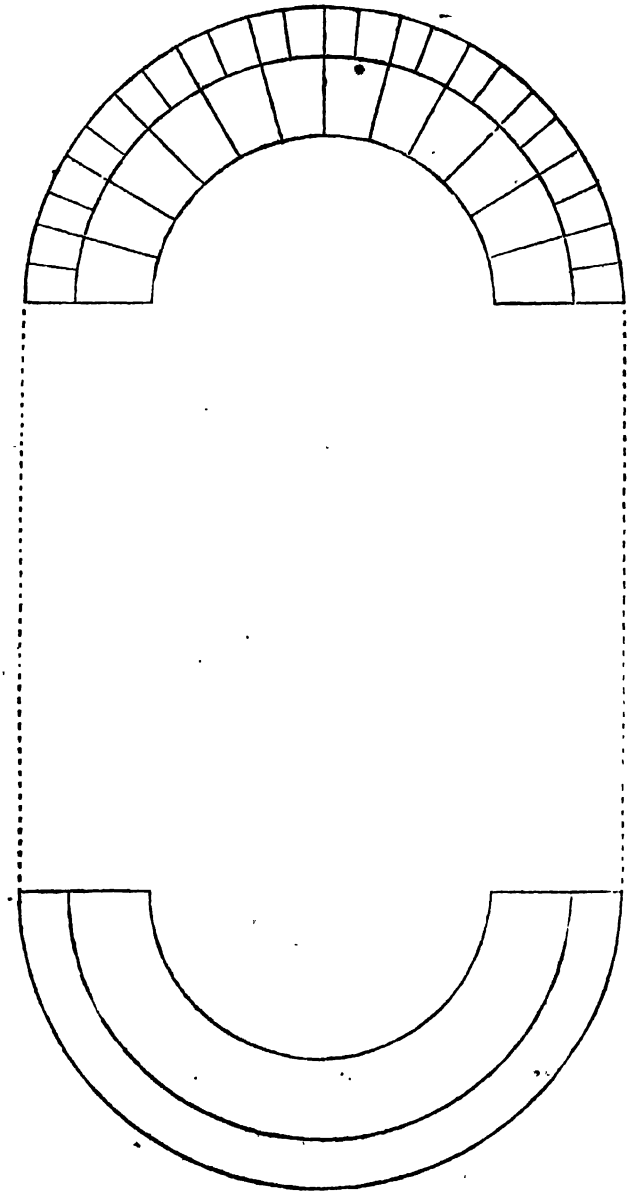
One window on the opposite side of the same room.

One ditto to each Bed Room.

Court Yard in front of Lodge, with only one Gateway at F.

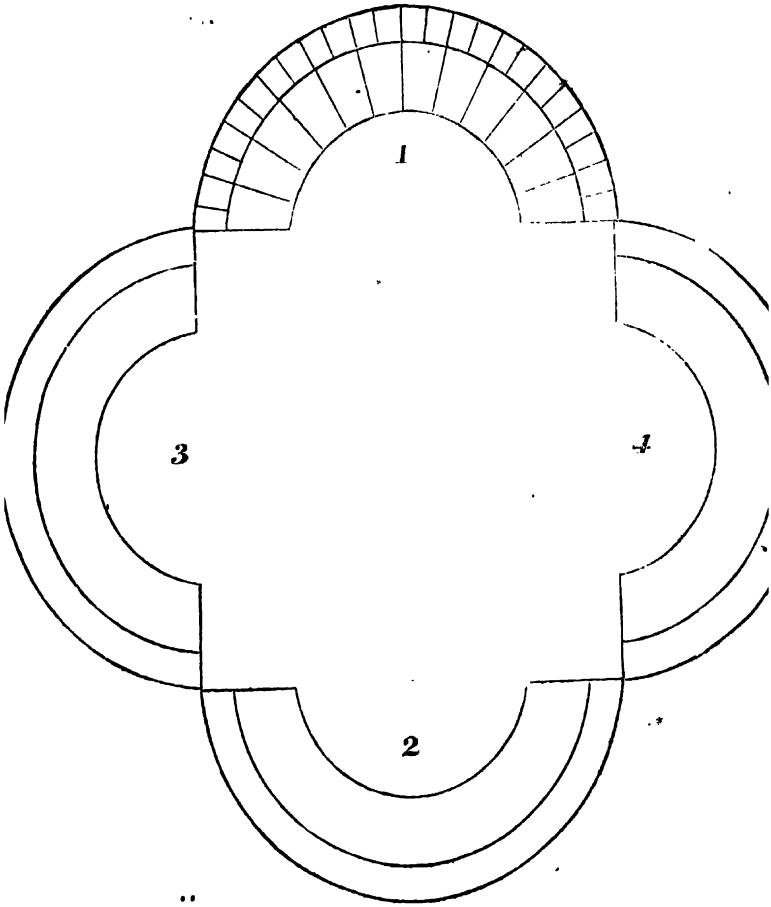
No. 2.

PAUPERS' LODGE for 24 Families, or 96 Single Paupers.



No. 3.

PAUPERS' LODGE for a triple or quadruple No. of Families or Paupers, to what is mentioned on the Plan, No. 1.



APPENDIX B.

BROWN BREAD.

1.—Coarse wheaten flour or sharps at 6s. ℔ bushel, of 56 lbs.

Best barley, ground into flour, with the pollard.

	s.	d.
One lb. of the above flour, mixed and made into bread or bannock of 1 lb. 3 oz., is equal in value to	0	1⅛
Nearly 11 lb. of which for	1	0

2.—Best wheat, ground into meal, the bran and pollard not taken from it.

Do. barley, ground into flour, the bran alone being taken out.

	s.	d.
One lb. of the above flour, *mixed* and made into bread or bannock of about 1 lb. 4 oz., is equal in value to	0	1½
Eight lb. of which for	1	0

N.B.—July, 1821.—The best wheat is calculated at 8s. ℔ bushel.
barley at 3s. 6d.

At a Vestry held for the parish of Overton, Hants. on the 26th day of June, 1821,

Resolved, that the bread which has been given at Court House, shall be adopted by the overseers of the parish, for the relief of the vagrants and beggars who apply for relief, according to a specimen of bread shown at the meeting,—as follows:

The bread in question, consisting of half wheaten flour, commonly called sharps or seconds, and half barley flour, with the pollard in it, the bran being simply taken out.

W. SPRINT, Jun.
Vestry Clerk.

APPENDIX C.

OVERTON,

HANTS.

Notice is hereby given;

THAT ANY BEGGAR

Residing at Overton, or travelling the

HIGHWAY,

May have, at any time of the day, his or her choice of a

MEAL, GRATIS,

OF

COARSE BROWN BREAD OR

OATEN CAKE,

such as is good and substantial, and will stay them at

Hard Labour for Six Hours,

or on the road for

TWELVE MILES,

By applying for the same at

COURT HOUSE.

No person begging for

MONEY, BEER, OR MEAT,

Need apply,

since this humble offering to a fellow creature is intended alone for that poor, but meritorious, class of men, who beg from necessity, rather than from choice, and would prefer the

BROWNEST HOUSEHOLD CAKE,

earned by the sweat of their own brow, to the

WHITEST FRENCH BREAD, DOLED OUT TO THEM IN CHARITY.

May, 1821.

APPENDIX D.

OVERTON, HANTS.

Notice is hereby given;
That any
TRAVELLER
in
DISTRESS,
or
BEGGAR,
HOUSELESS
and PENNYLESS,
May find shelter,
and have a Night's Lodging,
GRATIS;
In a Shed well fenced in
from wind and weather,
and provided with clean Straw,
BY APPLYING TO EITHER OF THE
OVERSEERS,
or to the MASTER of the WORKHOUSE.

N.B.—I may here mention, as a proof of the success of this system, that at the last vestry meeting for the parish of Overton, the following questions were put to the overseer, and the following answers given.

What was the number of persons applying daily for relief before the present system was adopted?

Eight, upon an average; sometimes, ten, twelve, and sixteen.

Has that number diminished sensibly since the present plan was adopted?

Since my return from London, which was a fortnight last Monday, there have been only five applicants in all! and not a penny given to any one.

APPENDIX E.

BEGGARS' SHED.

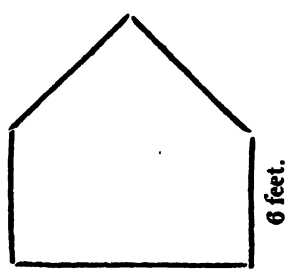
At a Meeting held at the Workhouse of Overton, Hants, on Tuesday, June 5, 1821.

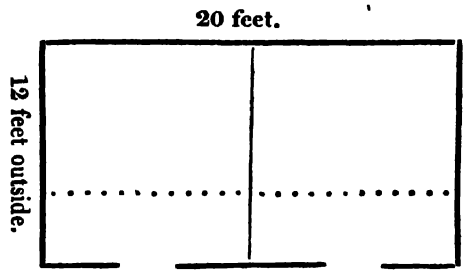
Resolved, that a cottage be built adjoining the west end of the Workhouse, of mud and stone, foundation, 20 by 12 feet; —two doors of 6 by 2½ feet.—Partitions of wattle, and walls 6 feet high, the outer wall common thickness of 14 inches,— the roof to be thatched.

Mr. Minchin agrees to build them for five pounds, well worked and substantial, and to make the timber of the roof and middle partition of wattle, plastered, with plates, rafters, lath and tier, for four pounds more..... £9 0s. 0d.

2 doors, 6 feet by 2 ft. 6 inches	1	10	0
Straw, thatching, &c.....	4	10	0
	£15	0	0

Allowing Mr. Minchin, the master of the Workhouse, the use of the materials of the old gateway, beside straw and thatching, at the usual price per square.





Within each room, a dry Terrace of chalk or sand, to be raised the entire length of each room; 7 feet wide, and 18 inches high, with a sort of wooden rafter laid along the dotted line to preserve it. This Terrace is to serve as a bench to sit upon; and with a couple of coarse sacks and a quantity of clean straw, the latter to be renewed every 8 or 10 days, it will serve as a bed to shelter the houseless, pennyless traveller.

A jug for water, to be the only utensil allowed—no fire place or fire on any account.

APPENDIX F.

1821.—Overton, between the 12th and 14th May, commenced making oat cakes; and about the 20th, bannocks of barley, distributing them to such beggars as applied at Court-house for relief. The consequence is, that the vagabonds or gentry beggars avoid the house, while the needy are glad of a meal of such plain coarse bread as our forefathers used to eat, and such indeed as is now commonly eaten by the Scotch and Irish Peasantry.

The following Memoranda mark the different applications for a week or two.

May 23d.	2 Beggars eating a meal of barley bread.
24	5
25	4
26	4
27	2 Needy.
28	9 Needy Irish.
29	4. 3 Vagabonds, 1 needy.
30	11 Mostly needy.
31	4 Needy.

No meat, beer, or money being given, the professional beggar will not apply for that he does not want, a hearty meal of coarse wholesome bread: as a proof, I will mention two or three instances.

A woman and a child came early the 26th May, telling the usual tale of her distress, and desire for relief. To this I gave the invariable answer now adopted: that I had no money, beer, or meat to give, but some barley bread, and upon asking whether she had breakfasted, she said, she would not tell a lie—she had eaten a morsel, but was still hungry, and had a couple more children down the road. I said, "Bring them all up if they want bread, but I fear they have also breakfasted." She said

she would bring them immediately, but neither woman nor children came. About 12 o'clock I was trotting up the road, and overtook this woman moving towards town with another, and a bevy of children, three in number; as soon as she heard a horse's step, she turned sharp round upon me, and with outstretched neck, exclaimed, "For God's sake"—and had proceeded no farther, when she recognized me, drew in her neck, and shrunk back, as desirous of no further conversation. I claimed acquaintance, saying, she had disappointed me in an expected visit with all her fine brood of children and family, who seemed so well off, that they stood in no need of my plain breakfast: that I was sorry it was not good enough, but the next time they honoured me with a visit, roast beef and plum pudding should be provided.

29th. A man calling himself a sailor, called. He was rather dainty, said he could eat a little to *accommodate me,* and went off laughing.

A decent man, whom I met on the road, called himself a journeyman coach maker, and asked relief. I mentioned the bread, and this was sufficient; he walked off.

The same man obtained a pint of beer of Master Hammerton, the blacksmith, calling himself a blacksmith.

In general, however, the very mention of barley bread is sufficient, and they either stay away altogether, or move off with some excuse.

On the other hand, those that are really what they describe themselves,—in want, sit down, and with good will, and the best of all sauces, eat from ¾ lb. to 1 lb. or 1¼ lb. each, of the cake or bannock, of barley bread, which, plain and coarse as it be, is very sweet;—and from such poor unfortunates, expressions of homely goodwill and gratitude burst forth occasionally from the heart, and make the donor feel gratified in witnessing the result of his plan,—which is simply to satisfy the cravings of nature, in those who are poor, needy, hungry, and begging from necessity—not from choice.

A few instances may be cited.—A man from Wiltshire, a nurseryman or under gardener, said he was directed to Court House for relief—he ate so voraciously from hunger—that, contrary to my custom, I said, "My friend, put a piece in your pocket, and eat it an hour hence, when it will do you more good." His history was as follows. "He went from Wiltshire six weeks ago, to seek employment near London; he had only one week's labor, spent the few shillings he possessed, sold part of his clothes, and was returning home."

An old man came, the afternoon or evening of the 29th May, from Salisbury, fasting, against a sharp N. E. wind. He lodged in the Workhouse Shed, borrowed a sack, stripped off his clothes, using them as a covering or blanket, and slept warm in the straw.

Again—Sunday, the 27th. Two squads, one of 5, and the other of 2, Irish women and girls, called; eat all very heartily, and went away smiling and very grateful.

June 1	2	1 Needy.	
2	3	1 Do.	
3	3		
4	1		
5	1 Needy.	6 Vagrants.	
6	2	1 Do.	
7	1		
8	3 Needy.		
9	5		
10	1	1 Vagrant.	
11	4 of which	1 Vagrant.	
12	1 Vagrant.		
13	1 Do.		
14	1 Do.		1 Lodger.
15	6 Needy.		2 Lodgers.
16			
17	1 Needy.		

June 18 No application, although several have passed on.

19 2

20 6 3 Lodgers.

21 4 1 Do.

22 4 3 Needy. 1 Do. A tramp. On meeting him in the morning, and asking him whether he would have any breakfast at Court House, he said, "the next town is not far off," only 8 or 9 miles, and without adding another word, set off.

23 5 or 6. Needy. 2 Lodgers.

24 4 2 Do.

25 5 1 Do.

26 No application.

27 A sailor called, who seemed as if flushed with the Tuscan or Kentish grape, and ate of the bread, expecting some beer; he was cruizing about the country, and intended, he said, to go to his parish, and insist on their providing for him;—the usual resort of all people who are out of conceit with their work.

28 4 2 Needy.

29 2

30 4 2 Lodgers. Of these, 2 of respectable appearance — 1 vagrant, a soldier. "Served at Waterloo; broken down, wants relief. Are you hungry? Your honor, I must confess, I had a penny roll and a pint of beer, just now, down in the village. Good—do you want shelter? Why, your honor, I have just paid for my lodging. Then if you are not hungry, and have a night's lodging, there is nothing I can do for you;" and thus he walked off, bowing and acknowledging how much he was obliged:—knowing, as he did, that I was provided with brown bread and a shed

to shelter him, had he asked for either; and the consequence was, his defences, to use a military phrase, being laid bare, he spoke the plain truth at once: when I told him in addition, he might save his pence next morning and have a hearty meal of bread, he thanked me, and said he would come, but he never did.

June 31	3	
July 1	6	Needy.
2	2	
3	1	

One rule was invariably observed—never to allow any person receiving bread to take it away, but to eat the same before the door, sitting upon the steps, with a jug of water before him;—or, in more homely language, and that which they understand best—"eat as much as you please and pocket none."

At Andover, a mendicant society gives away a bason of soup, and allows a poor traveller or beggar, applying to the overseer for a ticket, to lodge in a room of the jail, upon a bed of straw, covered with a blanket. But a traveller who slept there two nights ago, says, that from the vermin he found there, a clean bundle of straw would be much better.

At Salisbury, I have heard there is a mendicant society, patronized by Lord Radnor, which gives to each beggar 17 ounces of bread, besides cheese and beer, and a feather bed; but this information comes from a mendicant, and cannot be depended upon.

The following facts may be given, to shew the abuse to which the present system of providing for the worthless poor is liable.

1st.—Whitchurch. All out-parishioners can obtain labour by seeking for it, because they know they can be removed from the parish if they apply for relief. All or most of those who belong to the parish spend their harvest wages as soon as earned, and instantly apply for relief.

2nd.—Whitechurch. An active overseer of this parish, named —, being applied to by 18 stout labouring parishioners, shortly after the harvest, for bread-money, asked, if they could not obtain work of any farmer: "No, (was the reply,) no where; and we want bread or work."—"Very well," (said Mr. ———,) "I have a large piece of common that wants cutting up, come to me next Monday." On the morning appointed, only 7 or 8 of these volunteer paupers attended: the others had found work, some here, some there. Each day the number of these men diminished; and at the end of the week, so few were these labourers, that £1 sufficed to pay for their work.

3rd.—Overton. Young men go to the overseer, say they are ill, when only idle, and demand a weekly allowance of bread. When sent to the surgeon, they can obtain no certificate.

4th.—A notorious idler will not work, so long as any magistrate orders bread for himself and starving family. The farmers will not even employ this man gratis, from his determined idleness.

5th.—A labourer has a cottage of £5 a year rent found him, and lets it in lodging to his own advantage—has shoes and clothes, and bread, for his family—in short, he is such an idler, that he eats the bread of charity, and that only; since it is his principle not to work, so long as he can by any pretence avoid it.

6th.—A gentleman travelling some time ago, between London and Cheltenham, observed a pump by the road side, for which there was no apparent use; he asked a man to explain the reason, which the latter did as follows.—Some years ago, a neighbouring village was much infested by beggars; and a gentleman who resided there, dug a well, and erected this pump, in order to give employment to such as asked for re-

lief:—the mode adopted was to present each person with two buckets, in order, that for a certain time, and for a certain small sum proportioned to the labour, he might fill them, and carry water to a field at some distance which required irrigation. In consequence, the village was very shortly avoided by these sturdy and unwelcome visitors, and the pump remains of no other earthly use, than as a memento of this gentleman's acumen.

APPENDIX G.

MAXIMS OF POOR RICHARD.

1.—Sloth, like rust, consumes faster than labour wears;
While the used key is always bright.

2.—Drive thy business, let not that drive thee;
Sloth makes all things difficult, industry all easy.

3.—Industry needs not wish,
And he that lives upon hope will die fasting.

4.—There are no gains without pains;
Then help hands, for I have no lands.

5.—He that hath a trade hath an estate.
At the working man's house hunger looks in, but dares not enter.

6.—Plough deep while sluggards sleep,
And you shall have corn to sell and to keep.

7.—Handle your tools without mittens; remember, the cat in gloves catches no mice.

8.—Constant dropping wears away stones, and little strokes fell great oaks.

9.—Keep thy shop, and thy shop will keep thee.
If you would have your business done, go; if not, send.

10.—He that by the plough would thrive,
Himself must either hold or drive.

Dr. Franklin, also, observes, that "in those countries in which the greatest public provision was made for the poor, they were in the worst condition; and in those countries, where least provision was made for them, they were in the best."

The cause is most evident—that "the labourer who is worthy of his hire" depends, in the latter instance, upon his own exertions and industry.

THE END.

Maurice, Printer, Fenchurch Street.

THE IMPRESS,

CONSIDERED

AS THE CAUSE

WHY

BRITISH SEAMEN

DESERT

FROM

OUR SERVICE TO THE AMERICANS;

WITH A

REVIEW

OF THE ENCOURAGEMENT NOW HELD OUT BY

THE ROYAL NAVY,

AND THE MEANS IN OUR POWER

OF

ABOLISHING THE IMPRESS.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR,
BY G. HAYDEN, BRIDGES-STREET, COVENT-GARDEN.

1810.

PRICE, One Shilling and Sixpence.

THE EFFECTS

OF

THE IMPRESS OF SEAMEN,

Considered at the Epoch of 1810

THE necessities of the State, which heretofore induced a Violation of the Liberty of the Subjects of this Realm, by forcibly impressing its Seamen, have, by a long Continuance, produced a habitual Acquiescence in the Minds of the Nation relative thereto.

It was long foreseen that when the States of America, should obtain their Independance, our Seamen would fly thither for Shelter from the Grasp of the Impress, and engage in the commercial Navigation of those Countries, where a similarity of Language, Usages, and Customs, would render it impracticable to trace their Origin, and impossible to recover their Services to the

Mother Country; nor can any Doubt be entertained of the great Numbers which have been thus for ever lost to the Navy of Great Britain: but it was reserved for the present awful Moment to find them engaged on board the Ships of War of those States; and hence we must be prepared for their eventually manning the numerous Privateers also, with which, in case of a Rupture, the Seas will abound: but I hope it is not yet too late to bring some of them back to their Allegiance, and their Country, or at least to prevent their further expatriation.

In saying we are arrived at an habitual Acquiescence in the Impress, is a fact not to be dissembled; but I do not charge the national Character with any Dereliction of Principle therein, because it is founded on a general Belief that it is *inevitable:* had any Attempt been made to justify it otherwise, the boasted Liberty of the Subject, so long infringed, had been reduced to a mere Phantom.

Its Continuance during so many late Years, without any Allusion to the Subject in Parliament, that I remember, has confirmed that public Opinion; but I am so far from approving such silence, that I think it much to be regretted, on

this important Subject, which has not only deeply involved our Liberties, but driven a Class of Men from our Shores, who constitute its best Defence. I do not wish to see important and delicate Questions agitated unnecessarily, but deem it a Duty to endeavour to avert an important Evil, which has resulted and will result from the Impress, so long as it continues. Let the sound and wholesome Laws of the Realm repose undisturbed in their Operation, whilst Time in its even Course confirms and strengthens them; but let the supposed necessity of violating the first Law of civilised Society be frequently and temperately canvassed: the more frequently it is discussed the better, and the more consoling to those who must sustain the Evil, *if unavoidable.* I am encouraged to think it would admit of very temperate Consideration and Debate, void of all Party feeling, it being in my Recollection that a Member who has kept uniform to his Party, on all other Occasions, came prominently forward, regardless of every Thing but our Naval Interests, as soon as that vital Part was in Danger; I do believe that a Discussion temperately conducted, would, after so many Years of silent Acquiescence, leave a grateful Impression, even if not found ulti-

mately to admit of Relief, which however I am persuaded would not be the Case.

A Member, of conspicuous Philanthropy, moved annually for the Amelioration of the Lot of those Africans who, being purchased on their own Native Shores, are transported to our Sugar Islands; and, notwithstanding that a long settled Prejudice was then united with sordid Interests, which at first seemed to preclude the Hope of a Change for the better, yet by the Annual Agitation of the Question in that Assembly the Result has been very consoling to Humanity; and if it has not been so complete as its most sanguine Partizans wished, it has been highly so to every reflecting moral Man, who, whilst he is forced to admit that perfect Systems are not attainable in this World, still struggles undismayed to diminish its Evils, and rejoices at every Point he gains in ameliorating the Lot of his fellow Creatures.

As I have the advantage of soliciting the Reader's Attention to the Interests of one of the most valuable Classes of His Majesty's Subjects, and seek no more than to restore them to that Share of the Laws personal Protection, which all who have not transgressed those Laws ought to enjoy,

(for this alone in my Estimation constitutes the Liberty of the Subject) I trust it will not be refused to examine the *existing Circumstances* of this Class of Men, and it will soon be seen how much the *Circumstances* have changed since it was under Parliamentary Discussion,—a Class of Men to whom we owe more immediately the Blessing of being an unconquered Nation, than to any other, and to whom we must yet confide, under the Guidance of their incomparable and invaluable Officers, the best rational Hope and Expectation of remaining an unsubdued Kingdom; but I should wish, in the impending Struggle with France, that French Conscriptions might no longer find a Parallel in these Realms.

One of the Points on which I rest my Belief, that the Impress is not indispensable, nor an Evil for which there is no Remedy—is founded on the great Alteration in the Circumstances, under which a Seaman *now serves*. Had there been *no Change* in their Situation on board, the long Continuance of the Impress might have induced a contrary Idea; and not in one or two Points only have they changed, but in almost all, and certainly in all that are important both to the Interests and Comfort of the Seamen.

The invaluable Changes which have taken Place in the last fifteen Years are such, as if only left to operate for themselves, by taking off the Impress, will be found I trust when aided by another important Succedaneum I have to propose, sufficient to enable the Government to dispense with a Measure of all others the most unjust in itself, and most baneful in its Consequences, as the late Rencontre with the American Frigate, the Chesapeak, sufficiently proves.

I will pass over the Origin and early Periods of this Evil, to avoid a painful and useless Retrospect, and take a nearer and more agreeable View of my Subject, touching only on the former War with America, which ended 1782, and then consider the present War of the French Revolution, beginning 1793, and now relapsed into what I consider as a Continuation of the same War.

I shall not recur to the varions Plans for obviating the Impress which were written, and proposed, before, or during the American War, many of which I doubt not, did Credit to the Heads and Hearts of those who then endeavoured to avoid so great an Evil; I have heard there were many such, (tho' I never saw them) but must conclude they

were deemed insufficient at that Time; and, during the American War, so few Alterations were made, that the Question admitted of no more alleviation at its Conclusion, than in its beginning, or in the remote Periods which preceded it.

During the Continuance of the American War the Impress continued without Remission, nor could the Navy have been manned without it, considering the then existing Circumstances of Discouragement; but why we are to suppose that the Evil admits of no Remedy *at the present Time;* or why we should remain in the same Opinion respecting it, when all the important Circumstances which regard the Lot of a Seaman in the Royal Navy have so entirely changed, I can neither comprehend, nor assent to; at least it calls for a further Examination of the Subject,—I will here state those Changes:

The three Points which regard the Seaman, as the most requisite and forcible, are—his Provisions—his Pay—his Prize Money,—may they include all his real Wants, all his just Demands, all his legitimate Expectations, and Encouragement.

Provisions—His Provisions, before the Com-

mencement of the present War 1793, were scanty, and for hearty and healthy Men, often inadequate—they are since augmented: they are now sufficient; nay they are ample.

Pay—His Pay was also too low, it has since been *doubled*, and is now *sufficient*.

Prize Money—His Prize Money was shared according to an old Usage, which gave too much to the superior Officers, too little to the able Seaman, and too much to inferior Seamen and Boys, almost Children.—Those superior Officers now receive less—the able Seaman receives more—the inferiors and Boys receive less, and all that has thus been withdrawn from the superior and inferior Classes, has gone in Augmentation to the Seamen, justly and equitably distributed, and distinguished into Gradations founded on the real Service they render on board.

And now let me ask the Reader whether, under such important Changes, such substantial Amelioration, ought we to consider the Impress equally indispensable as before, and to have recourse to the same Violence and Coercion as were resorted to under the former discouraging Circumstances, without reconsidering the Subject?—Yet this is only a Part of what I have to observe, on the

Question, and includes no Part of the Means by which I propose to guard my Plan from exposing the Service to any possible Risk in trying it.

These Changes not existing at the Commencement of this protracted War; the Ships in Commission being very few, and the Marines reduced to the lowest Ebb, it required every effort to man the Navy, and began, as might be supposed, with Press Warrants, and Press Gangs; Press Rendezvous, and Tenders fitted with Press Rooms; an Establishment, the Expence of which, if in future retrenched, and added to the Bounty, as an Inducement to volunteer, will further assist my Plan for avoiding Compulsion, by substituting Invitation: but the worst Effect has been that all these violent and revolting Proceedings have created, and constantly kept up such a Repugnance in the Minds of the Seamen, and the Confinement when on board has so perpetuated that Irritation, as to prevent all the subsequent Advantages from being clearly and calmly considered and appreciated; their Minds are so pre-occupied, and their Imaginations so inflamed, that all these Advantages are overlooked, and what would otherwise operate as Attraction, meets

only with Repulsion; and so, I am persuaded, it will remain, until they are encouraged to examine them comparatively with other Services, under the Calm which will be produced by *a Cessation of the Violence*, but I hope and believe *no longer*; when, being impartially examined, so many important and consoling Truths must and will establish a Conviction on their Minds in favor of the Naval Service.

It has been told me that I appreciate their Mode of reasoning too highly. I do not wish to inflame; but their not putting any Temptation or Reward in Competition with *rational* Liberty, proves to me that, when taken in the aggregate, *they reason well*, and renders the Task I here impose on myself, as grateful as it is disinterested, only lamenting that I can do so little for those who deserve so much: but to return to my subject.

It will be asked, whether now and heretofore Volunteers were not received when they offered; and whether, if their Numbers were sufficient, others would be impressed. I answer they *are* received at the Rendezvous, received by the Press Gang, the whole Scenery and Machinery of which only keeps up this long rivetted Irritation. The

Volunteer hitherto could only conclude he had made a good Choice between two Evils, and thus is led to depreciate a positive good, for such I contend is the present Naval Service, to one who is by Profession a Mariner. Let the Pay *alone* of seven Shillings a Week, with Board and Lodging included, and placed almost beyond the Means of Expence, except his Cloaths, be compared with the Labourer of the Land, providing every Want for himself and Family out of twelve Shillings per Week, and who would not prefer ploughing the Ocean: but with the Addition of Prize Money also, there remains no Comparison whatever. Sailors often receive twenty, thirty, and forty pounds at the Pay Table, and by another Regulation they can now remit any Part thereof to their Parents, Relations, or Friends, without Risk of Abuse, Loss, or Deduction.

It may be urged against me that our commercial Navigation, or what is called the Merchant Service, holds out higher Wages than the Navy; it does, as the Matter now stands, but my Plan goes also to facilitate, as will be found hereafter, the Manning the Merchant Ships. The Impress is one of the Causes of those high Wages, it requiring a strong Temptation to urge the Men

to run the Risk of being impressed from on board the Merchant Ships, but by its Cessation they will come forth from their hiding Places; for many who have not gone the length of Expatriation, are thus privately maintained by their Relations, or, in some way or other, evade a sea life, after the breaking out of a War, whilst others are restrained from embracing a Profession which subjects them to the Loss of Liberty.

In whatever Point I view the Impress, I find it militating against the Interests of the Navy, even considering as I do, our commercial Navigation connected with those Interests. Could I ascertain the Numbers who navigate for the Americans, many of whom have formed the strongest of all human Ties in that Country, with an Expectation, hitherto not infringed, that it will not be torn asunder, I should be enabled to shew that though the Impress has supplied our pressing Wants, our temporary Necessities, it has made such a Deficiency in our permanent Supply of Seamen, as can only be remedied in future by abolishing it, without Delay, and in Case of a Rupture, the Americans are too shrewd to overlook such an Advantage; they will encrease every Temptation to allure our Seamen, whilst

the Impress will continue to accomplish the end they aim at.

But even in the present State of the Competition of the Merchant Service, the latter has its Drawbacks: they navigate with fewer Hands, the Work is very laborious, and, as themselves say, they wear and tear out more Clothes, they have no regular professional Assistance whilst sick, no Pension in Case of Hurts, and very subject to be captured by the Enemy, and as to Privateers which hold out more Prize Money, they seldom in fact produce so much as a Frigate, or even a Ship of the Line, if estimated throughout the whole of a War. The Reign of the Privateer is seldom long, it usually ends in a French Prison, often with Loss of a Limb; no claim on Greenwich; no very skilful Surgeon to heal the Wound, or compensate the Misfortune; if the Space, to which I wish to confine myself, admitted me fully to state the Consolations and the Comforts which Greenwich alone hold out for the decline of a Seaman's Life, it ought to induce a Preference for the Navy.

The sole Reason why these Considerations have had least weight where they should have produced the strongest effect, with the Seamen, is, as I

firmly believe, the Repugnance created and constantly kept up by the Impress, added to its inseparable Consequence, Confinement on board the Ship he is sent to serve in; the Man so obtained cannot be trusted on Shore for a long Time after he comes on board; his Imprisonment is the inseparable Concomitant of the Impress, but if admitted to arise therefrom, may reasonably be expected to cease therewith. I have formerly had a very near View of British Seamen when the Service had none of those Advantages with which it now abounds. The Grievances which then outweighed all the others were what they termed, *being pressed, and not getting Liberty to go on Shore*; and by what I learn it still remains the same, and is thus proved to be sufficient to outweigh all the Good so abundantly conferred upon them since: but I do not admit that a just Estimate *can* be formed of the Voluntary Impulse *until* the Coercive Measure be laid aside; or that the former can reach its full Vigour 'til the other be forgotten.

That the Abolition of the Impress and Substitution of a mere Enrolment of Volunteers, conducted in a Manner as unlike a Press Rendezvous as possible, would even at first encourage and in-

crease the Volunteers, I doubt not, and yet that it might not in the Outset, after such long-rivetted Disgust, produce the requisite Numbers, I am willing to admit, and shall, I trust, be found to have provided against it; but although in its first Stage it might not operate sufficiently, the Abolition of the Impress publickly avowed, must at least induce a different Train of thinking, and I trust by a Contemplation of the present Advantages, furnish in the end the Quota required.

Suppose then an avowed Intention so grateful to their feelings, and that the increased Liberty to go ashore, when in Port, was at first attended by some Loss of Mariners; and suppose even that it was considerable, it becomes incumbent on me to shew how I will supply the Deficiency, but whilst I proceed to do so, let the Reader bear in Mind, that every Defalcation from the Navy is a direct increase of Supply to the Commercial Navigation, or as it is called Merchant Service, and that their Wages lowering with this Increase of Supply, and still more by those before-mentioned secreted Mariners now coming forward, will diminish the Competition of Wages heretofore operating against the Navy. The Reader may

wish to know the Proportion they bear to each other.

21 March, 1809, there were employed of Seamen in the

Royal Navy - - - - - -	98,600
Commercial Navigation -	157,105
Total - - - - -	255,705

But if we contemplate at first a probable Defalcation of 10,000 Seamen by a Degree of Indulgence in going on Shore, to which they are hitherto less accustomed, then there will be 10,000 more men thrown over to the Merchant Service, sufficiently distressed at the present moment,* as the high Wages amply prove: but not one of those 10,000 Seamen are thereby lost to the Country, not expatriated to America, nor even out of the Reach of the same Means heretofore used to recover them, should unfortunately so important a Measure as the Abolition of the

* It remains to be known whether all those Indiamen which have so lately been lost were not insufficiently manned, in respect to *British Seamen*.

Impress and its concomitant Confinement not induce the favorable Alteration I expect in the Minds of the Seamen towards the Naval Service; but who can believe that it will not produce a most important Change, removing all their Wrongs, and obliterating their painful Remembrances; and in this Case I think the Change, politically considered, must be for the better, it appearing to me that the Maritime Character of the United States, and the aspiring Zeal of the French Nation to recover their Naval Importance can have nothing more favorable to their Views, and injurious to us, than a Proceeding which drives our Seamen from their native Shores; and if the rencontre with the Chesapeak Frigate has proved that they were recently found even in their Ships of War, what must be the Numbers who serve in their extensive commercial Navigation, perhaps ever lost to us and to their Country.

The Royal Navy is not, however, manned by Seamen only, but by Seamen and Marines; the latter are all Volunteers, and enjoy, in common with the former, all the Advantages I have before detailed: they are more easily recruited than any other Corps at the same Bounties, but have

sometimes been left to contend at lower Bounties, and yet have attained to upwards of 30,000 Men; a Proof that putting away Coercion, and the Disgust of the Impress, the superior Advantages of the Navy are not overlooked or underrated by another Class of Men, to whom no superior Powers of Discrimination can be imputed, and yet voluntarily embrace the same Services, and share together their common Dangers and Rewards—neither can the Willingness to engage in the Marine Corps be in any way imputed to the Patronage they have received; for they have no other support than their Utility has obtained or extorted for them; their Superior Officers, worn out by long and meretorious Services, having no more Weight in the Political Scale than the Serjeants and Drummers who enlist them; neither can any Officer therein be allowed to purchase either his Commission or Advancement, and therefore Money has no more Influence than Patronage: but as the Resource by which I mean to supply any Deficiency of Seamen must be composed of the long tried and well approved Corps of Marines, I will here state the Proportion they bear to each other, and to both, at the Time of the last Return to Parliament, printed March 1809.

Total of Seamen then raised 98,600
Ditto of Marines - - - - - 31,400
Commercial Navigation - - 157,105

Therefore, not only has the Navy received an Aid of about one fourth of its whole Numbers, but the Commercial Navigation, being the original Source, has been exhausted in a lesser Degree by the whole of that Number,—30,000; and, as my Proposal goes to an Extension of Marines, I trust I am borne out in having said I contemplated the Interests of both Sea Services at one andthe same time.

The Proportion of Marines has constantly fluctuated; but I will beg Leave, for Perspicuity Sake, to assume and Reason upon (in Round Numbers) a Proportion of 30,000 Marines to 100,000 Seamen, as if an existing Proportion, and it is nearly what are now employed in the British Navy.

I propose, then, that the Marines be encreased from 30,000 to 50,000—that it be done at once, and not by any slow Progression, and that they be immediately employed in Composing the Garrisons of our Naval Arsenals, and supplying the Deficiencies arising in each Ship, as it may occur, until the Number of Marines, now employed in

each, be encreased to the Proportion which 50 bears to 30 in the total; and thus I shall not merely have provided for the Defalcation of 10,000 Seamen, but even, if it extended to 20,000 —not because I expect or believe it will amount so high, but because large expedients are never to rely on scanty Resources.

The Marines were first instituted more than one Hundred Years ago—and the very Principle on which they serve is that of being equally applicable by Sea and Land, as appears by their Motto, *per Mare et Terram*—they owe, as I before said, their Encrease to the present Strength of 30,000 Men, to their Utility; yet they hitherto only encreased as the Navy augmented, no other Motive being in View than that they should keep pace with each other, and even in that, I am sorry to add the Bounty given has generally been so low that they rather lagged behind, than kept Pace therewith.

But if my Plan be thought worthy of Attention, we must see the very reverse of this—the Admiralty must know they have a Force of Marines well composed and disciplined on Shore, before so great an Object as the Abolition of the Impress can be attempted, besides, the Evil of a

scanty and insufficient Supply of Marines to the Ships of War, is an evil of so long standing, that there are few of our superior Naval Officers who do not know, that the Service has almost always, hitherto, been obliged to receive them in a half disciplined State, to the great annoyance both of the Naval Commander and Marine Officer of the Ship.

It is not with such Men as those, I presume to substitute a Marine for a Seaman, but to encrease the Proportion with stout and able Men previously well diciplined on Shore, and with such I am of Opinion the number of Marines might safely be encreased in the Proportion I have stated of three to five; and whilst the Experiment is under Trial, the Navy and Commercial Navigation will separately or jointly feel an Augmentation, or if I may say, an Affluence of Seamen, as if 20,000 were added to the former Total of British Seamen, *employed* in *both* Services.

Besides, many concealed Sailors will return to their Profession, on an Abolition of the Impress; and, the well founded Expectation that no more need fly for refuge to the Ships of the United States, may fairly be considered as approximating to the ultimate Object of obtaining a Sufficiency both for the Navy and commercial

Navigation and contemplating such an Event as a surplus for the latter, the Superabundance must flow to the Navy, because a Sailor on Shore has no daily Pay as a Soldier has, therefore speaking of them generally they must embark, and the existing Encouragement assures me that they will engage in the Naval Service.

But though, according to my Plan, the Navy would in future receive no Seamen, but Volunteer Seamen, it surely is not to be supposed that Volunteer Seamen will not encrease, when the Restraint on board, which they most complain of, is done away; yet I have provided against the worst, even if it did not encrease; and I hope no one will be so perverse as to pretend it would diminish by removing the principal objection; and, by the same Reason, I do not admit the number of Volunteer Seamen *now in the Navy* as furnishing a Criterion for a supposed Case which will reverse all the past Circumstances. The Coersive measure must cease, before the voluntary Impulse can be ascertained—the Repulsion which has hitherto checked it must be allayed, before the better Sentiment can expand—the freedom before violated, necessitates the subsequent Confinement, but the cause removed, will no longer

require its concomitant Confinement. To attempt to form an estimate of what would be the voluntary Feelings of Men cannot be done from those impressed, or deprived of Liberty, or even shut up in the same ship with those impressed; it can only be done by restoring them, as nearly as possible, to that state in which they would have been, had it never taken place, and if this does not operate immediately in some Degree, and ultimately so as to induce a Preference for the Naval Service, as it now stands, I am most unfortunately mistaken: but that it may safely be tried by an Augmentation, such as I propose, of the Kindred Branch of the same Family, the Royal Marines, I must contend, and having fairly estimated, and shewn, that in what regards the Seamen no Evil can arise, even if it did not produce Volunteers for the Navy in sufficient Numbers, the Seamen merely becoming for a Time more plentiful in the Merchant Service, I will as fairly examine, whether any Evil, in Case of Failure, could ensue from the Augmentation of the Marines, believing that Part of my Plan will be found equally free from objection—but first of the means to obtain such a supply of Marines.

The Practicability of Encreasing the Marines

I infer 1st. from their having reached to more than 30,000 Men, although in the early part of the war recruited at lower bounties—they should have the same Bounty as the Army, and to give it that immediate Effect, which the Magnitude of my Object requires, it will also demand a Permission *again,* to receive Volunteers from the Militia.

When the empoverished Establishment of the Marines recruited at lower Bounties than the Army had thrown them somewhat behind hand, the Permission which had been granted to the Militia to volunteer for the Army, was extended to the Marines; *but observe, restricted to One in Ten* only to prevent too many flocking to a Service so congenial with our own Character and insulated Country. But the Militia, if regarded *constitutionally,* should, in my Opinion, either not furnish to any *permanent Corps,* or afford its support to the Royal Marines in preference to all others, as being more congenial, if not more constitutional, than furnishing Troops either for continental Expeditions or colonial Sepulchres—and our Marines in the end of a War return home with a small Diminution of Numbers, such being the Discipline, and so great the Salubrity of our Naval Service from the Regulations introduced by the

Medical Department thereof, that very few die except those who fall in Action; nor have I a doubt, that almost all the Men furnished by the Militia to the Marines, are at this Time serving in our Navy in high Health and Spirits. I wish it were possible to entertain the same opinion of those which augmented what was called at that Time the disposable Part of the Army.

A Gentleman has favored me with a Return of the Proportion of Men in Health and Sickness in one of our Fleets serving abroad under Lord Collingwood:

Employed off Toulon, during the last Year, 10,000 Seamen.
Died in ditto, ditto, not exceeding 60 Men.

So insufficient have hitherto been the Supply of Marines, that for thirty Years past the Army has been frequently and repeatedly called upon to perform their Duties, and no specific Compact having been entered into by the Army to perform such Duty, it has usually been found productive of Disgust and Disagreement, and in a recent Instance in India of the worst of all Consequences. Wherein then can be found the Objection to a plenary Augmentation of Marines? Does not a Resource which now supplies one-fourth of the Navy on scanty Means deserve to

be tried to its full Extent? I do not believe that the Corps has ever had a sufficient Strength to enable us to judge of all the good Consequences which such an Affluence would occasion to the Navy and Commercial Navigation.

That an Increase of the total of Marines will alter the Proportion in each Ship will strike the Reader, and it is my Duty to explain in what Manner. I will calculate on a Ship of medium Size and Class for Brevity sake, omitting the larger and smaller, which will be affected in a similar Proportion.

A Ship of 74 Guns now receives 125 Marines.
Ditto would, by my Plan, receive 208 Ditto.

When it is recollected that, on an Occasion, to which it is painful to recur, the Proportion of Marines in each Ship contributed to save our Fleet from Destruction, an Augmentation of that Proportion may be regarded as a Pledge of greater Security; nor can I conceive how the proved Insufficiency of Strength, so long attested by calling on the Army to perform their Duties, can have been permitted to exist, even without contemplating an Augmentation of Marines as a Substitution for the Impress.

But as this will be read by some Persons wholly unacquainted with Ships, it may not be

amiss to inform them that Marines serve at the great Guns, and have even regular trained Artillery Companies; that the whole Proportion of Seamen now in a Man of War are not required on Service, all aloft at the same Time; that the Ropes and Powers which sustain and lift the Yards and Sails, descend to the Deck even in the present State of the Service, and are there acted upon by the Marines; also, that, on various Occasions, certain Parts of the Gun Batteries have been assigned wholly to the Charge of the Marine Officer and his Men, and that they have acquitted themselves to the full Satisfaction of their Brethren of the Navy, and complete Discomfiture and Defeat of the Enemy.

It may be supposed the Commander of the Ship might at first object to so large a Proportion of Marines: they have sometimes objected, and with Reason, to receive feeble and inefficient Marines, too hastily recruited into the raw Levies on the Spur of Necessity;—but of stout and able and efficient Marines, they never were heard to complain, but, with a generous Discernment, consider a strong Body of Marines highly valuable to the Ship, and, such as the Militia might afford, would be anxiously coveted: nor can it be supposed, when a Hope is entertained to obviate

the most painful Duty which attends their honourable Profession, they will not be desirous to give it a fair Trial, aye, a very candid one, accompanied by an anxious Desire to command Volunteers only, and to extend to their Men that Liberty and Recreation, when in Port, which they themselves enjoy.

I really know of no possible Evil from such an Augmentation of Marines. In the meantime, let the Proposal be deliberately weighed; it never can be so safely tried as when our Fleet is manned with 100,000 Seamen; nor can so great an Evil as the Impress be combated by Means less liable to Risk, or rather so wholly free from all Danger; the Continuance of the Impress not only assists the Americans in seducing our Sailors from their Allegiance, but discourages others from embracing a Sea Life, and thus prevents the Augmentation of that Class of Men at a Time when the probable Duration of our Call for them is beyond all human Calculation.

In contending for its Application, at the present Time, it may be thought, I shrink from asserting its practicability at a future Period, such as after an Interval of Peace and the breaking out of another War. But let the Reader weigh the systematic Attention of the Enemy to his extensive

Sea Ports, and his obvious Aim to recover naval Importance by every possible Means; grasping whole Provinces, solely with a View to that End: the Hollanders naval Character too is to be pressed into the involuntary Service, and his Rivers, Arsenals, and Shipping, become subservient thereto.

If, under these Circumstances, we may again contemplate our Navy and Marines reduced to a *mere Skelcton,* under the Delusion of such a hollow Truce as we have seen and may again see, then I am willing to admit my Plan may not be found applicable to a vigorous Recommencement;—but I cannot permit myself to suppose such a Case, or believe that any but a high Establishment of Seamen and Marines, can be resorted to in the present Position of the Question; and recommencing a War with *a strong Establishment of both,* I have full Confidence in my Plan, even under that distant Point of View, whilst the Interval of Time, if soon adopted, will, of itself, advance the Effects I endeavour to produce, of disposing our Seamen voluntarily to engage in the Naval Service.

London:—Printed by G. Hayden, Brydges Street, Covent Garden.

THE

STATE WATCHMEN:

A Poem:

WITH

EDITORIAL NOTES

AND

OBSERVATIONS.

HUMBLY RECOMMENDED TO THE CONSIDERATION OF THOSE WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

BY A WATCHMAN OF THE OLD SCHOOL.

" Before the door sat self-consuming Care,
Day and night keeping *wary watch and ward!*"
SPENSER

LONDON:
PUBLISHED BY E. WILSON, 88, CORNHILL.

1812.

W. Flint, Printer, Old Bailey, London.

THE

EDITOR TO THE PUBLIC.

HAPPENING to meet with the subjoined Poem, which evidently is only a part of a Work, the Editor, with a view to benefit society by the hints and observations which it containeth, judged the most expedient mode of sending forth these hints and observations would be, to print it, and "shame the "R-g-es!"

Since his determination was begun to be carried into effect, the Author hath appeared to his view, and promised unto him a *Second Part*, which he conceiveth will embrace much matter of importance, as the labours in a certain quarter will be closed shortly—perhaps ere this Work meeteth the public eye.

STATE WATCHMEN!

DARK was the night—despairing sounds
arose;
For MOTHER LONDON wept aloud her
woes;
Her children's fears, alas! were raised
quite high,
Groan answer'd groan, and murmured sigh
for sigh!
Men, maids, wives, widows, all with ghast-
ly stare
Exclaim'd—"What's that!"—"A Rob-
"ber, I declare!"
Screams, sweeter than sweet CATA-
LANI's tones,
Formed a shrill treble to the hollow
groans

These nightly wailings rent the midnight breeze,
And drowsy Watchmen waked to—cough and sneeze!
Alarm triumphant rode among the throng,
And blew his horn to sound the death-watch song!
Oh! night portentous of fell Terror's reign!
Grant we may never "see the like again."
(1) And thou, fair ALBION, blest above all Isles,
Where Plenty riots, and where Freedom smiles;
While Commerce proudly sails to other shores,
Fraught with the choicest goods of all our stores;
Blest Land! where labour meets with wholesome pay,
Not quite enough to bear him through the day,
Where Landlords rack their Tenants every year,
And Tenants kindly draw the Peasant's tear!

Where, though War's blast, methinks, will never cease;
Still Quartern Loaves are Sixteen-pence a-piece!
Bank-notes pass current in these best of times,
And Guineas travel on to distant climes.
In times like these, Oh! ALBION, ar'n't thou proud,
Though sad complaint is often heard aloud?
But what's complaint?—a peevish, mawkish thing!
Complaint, indeed, while we've—a GRACIOUS King!
Let TRADE, suspended by a single thread,
Hang low its drooping, poor dejected head;
But let stern WAR erect a gallant mien,
For War's a *Trade* which beautifies the scene,
Which harmonizes man, and brings not
Nor does it bring the Poor—a crumb of bread!!!

But then, it sounds alarm through Gallia's land,
And makes the Despot's Legions at a stand;
Gives flattering HOPE to cheer the wretched mind,
And brings *Despair* with all his troops behind!
But, Sons of Albion, let not plundering elves,
Who nightly prowl and rob to eat themselves,
Awake your fears, but fling them to the wind,
And take *their* petty depredations all in kind.
Far greater R-g--s are prowling round the State,
Then watch *their* Motions—'ere it be too late.
Reform the R-g---s, while honest restitution
Shall give us Freedom, and—THE CONSTITUTION!
Our Ministers astounded, caught the alarm;
The Home Department cried—"Ye brave, Oh arm!"

" For Murder stalks abroad with horrid
" front—
" Hark! there's a squeal! and there's
" another grunt!
" 'Tis dreadful this! we cannot sleep in
" quiet;
" This looks as bad as BURDETT's cursed
" riot!
" Let's to the S—H— and still these fears,
" And straight a plan propose among our
" Peers,
" Which shall embrace AUGUSTA's sound
" repose,
" And dry her tears, and harmonize her
" woes."
The plan laid down—a plan which all
must greet,
With pompous strides they strode down
Downing-street,
Nor stopp'd until St. Stephen's met their
sight;
And then the plan unfolded to the light.
Then R-D-R rose, majestically slow,
With solemn sounds to stop those scenes
of woe;
The listening Senators with outstretched
heads,
Shook on the benches as they'd shake in
beds;

And gaping anxious for the grand specific,
To cure this influenza—named terrific!
With wonder heard the Secretary move
(Worthy, indeed, of the immortal Jove!
While charmed!—delighted! they the motion catch)
"A Committee, Sir, to *twig* the Nightly Watch."
(4) Scarce did the words fall from the Statesman's tongue,
When dread alarm through every parish rung.
The grave old Dons, who nightly *guard* the street,
And *snore* their hours away as seemeth meet!
In boxes, safe from robber's deadly touch,
While robbers chuckle when they're free from clutch,
Exclaim'd with feeble voices, shrill—not deep—
"This night, good lack! doth R-D-R murder sleep?"
"No more in sleep shall midnight pass away,
"And morn steal in to tell us it is day.

"The Committee sits long, and plans no
"doubt they have
"Arranged, with care, this sinking town
"to save."

(5) But while their labours are not finished quite,
Suppose STATE WATCHMEN guard from night to night,
And while th' appointments suit the turn of all,
Let each, in turn, be ready at the call.

(6) WH-TB-D shall watch to quell this nightly rout,
Libations offer of his *own Brown Stout;*
And while the draughts are gliding smoothly down,
Rant of Reform to please the astonished town:
For Sam's a patriot—rightly understood,
Would "die with pleasure for his Coun-
"try's good."

(7) And GALLANT C-CHR-NE placed with all due care
Shall lie concealed in broken "*Sedan Chair.*"
But should a *Proctor* come within his grasp,
(For Proctors' stings are worse to him than *wasps'*,)

He'd instant sally forth, but not to kill,
He'd seize the learned Civilian by the *Bill!*
WILL SM-TH, with wond'rous powers, born to twig
Shall march about, and—munch a (8) *Turkey fig.*
(9) Old HUSS-Y keep the rogues and thieves at bay,
And drive all *Hussies* from the streets away.
For who so able, in a free born state,
With "Independence" written on his pate?
(10) MILES PETER A-DR-WS near the lonely cot
Well armed with musket, charged with *his own shot!*
And to amuse the people, while they *snore*,
Recite *his plays and prologues* by the score!
While G-D-Y shall inspect each *ugly* mug,
And give the rogues a smartish *Cornish*

(11) LORD T-MPL-E loudly roar, *Pro Patria's sake*,
To brandish o'er his head a—*public stake!*
Pluck'd from the hedges---costly ones I ween,
Which Britons planted ere distress was seen,

(12) GEORGE R-SE shall whistle,—"'Tis my best belief;
"I vow to God, look yonder there's a thief!"
While joining in the *Catch*, these honest fellows
Shall gaily chaunt, "OLD ROSE and burn "the bellows?"

(13) GRAVE PL-M-R too shall join the nightly guard,
And *promise* for a caption—large reward!

(14) While PR-CE recruits this national turmoil,
And in his hand brings forth a quart of *oil!*
To trim the lamps, lest rogues escape the search,
And leave these gallant Watchmen in the lurch.

(15) Let GENERAL PO-T-R guard the British fair;
His station in the *front* of *Grosvenor* square!

(16) JACK F-LL-R, starting with tremendous frown,
And *chair* up-held, shall knock each ruffian down.

(17) If Y-RM-TH's LORD should come in at the close,
Why Y-RM-TH's LORD will instant fall to *blows.*

(18) But T-RN-Y---where shall T-RN-Y take
his watch?
At any *place*, which honest George can
catch---
The *Borough* let him guard; for Bandon
Bridge
Will never call this hero to its ridge.
(19) If Catholics so bold attempt to sing,
Let PADDY D---IG-N-N roar out
"CHURCH AND KING!"
(20) And W-LL-L-Y P-LE, to still a feverish
nation,
Post placards large in form of "PROCLA-
MATION."
(21) FRANK BURDETT, to correct this "*cor-
rupt state*,"
Like Guardian Angel, sent by will of Fate,
In number stale rant fierce about "*Re-
form*,"
And waging *war*, allay the coming *storm!*
(22) Let SH-RID-N, with eloquence so bright,
Talk o'er his *glass* to drown the humid
night,
When *spirits* enter forth in martial strain,
Send them to sleep down his own *Gutter*
lane—
When roused to *action*, guardian---some-
what rash,
Not of his own, but other people's cash!

(23) While gentle WH-RT-N pleased *himself* to see!
Presents with aspect mild the *Treasury Key*.

(24) CR-K-R the *Ally*, noble "Parson," come,
And sputter Irish to the sound of drum.
Then write of *Battles*, such as Talavera,
And in poetic numbers *seem* a hero!
But should the Rogues, unheeding his Petition,
Refuse to yield, give 'em the *ninth Edition!!!*

(25) Terse HENRY B-NK-S, the purest of all pures,
Shall *labour* hard, and damn all *sinecures!*

(26) While W-LB-RF-RCE, so skilled to warm and teach,
Declaim, as usual, and begin to *preach!*
Warned by his doctrine, solemn, sound, and grave,
Rogues bend the knee, and own themselves HIS *Slave!*

(27) And W-RD-E shall, to fright each murderous thief,
Be vested with command---*Command in Chief!*

(28) Let General M--TH--W muster all the force,
And mount the General on a *Chesnut Horse!*

(29) While MA-THEW M-NT-G-E on pavement struts,
Give him to chew a few large *Horse Chesnuts!*
(30) Old Father AD-M shall be supervisor,
And to these blades "*gratuitous adviser!*"
But stop, my Muse! let no contentious elf
Deprive thee of that *rest* thou ow'st thyself—
Let no state cares annoy thy fever'd brain,
But haste to bed, and still the raging pain,
Which curst Alarm has struck across thy sense,
And bade thee marshal troops for home defence;
Which bade thee point where safety might reside,
Borne on the shoulders of Great Britain's pride.
And proud is she of those her sons thou'st named
For deeds in S—— H—e long since far famed—
Now let them *act*; and when the foes are quelled,
May each exclaim "'Twas I the monsters felled!"
Then grateful for their labours all shall sing,
God bless the People! and God bless the King!

Again shall widows dry their trickling
tears,
Again shall maidens dissipate their fears,
Again shall wives their husbands sweet
embrace—
Again shall joy sit on each jocund face:
Till time goes down a monument shall
rise,
Erected to the manes of unweeting sighs!
Loud groans shall *vanish* into empty air;
And *screams* go off in *concert* with despair!
PŒANS shall rise to sound each Hero's
name,
Blown by the trumpet of great GENERAL
FAME.
So come, my Muse! lay down thy weary
head,
And let us vanish to our truckle bed.
In garret snug we'll lie with *honest* heart;
And slumber dreaming of the SECOND
PART.

NOTES

AND

OBSERVATIONS.

(1) THE EDITOR feels proud and happy in offering his congratulations with those of the AUTHOR, on the enviable state of the united Empire, so truly, so lamentably, yet, politically speaking, so emphatically described in this apostrophe. The advice contained at the close of the apostrophe seems worth public attention.

(2) The dismay which struck the hearts of the Ministers, as might reasonably be expected, induced enquiry into the causes which produced the defection in the police establishment; and to them the public must be eternally indebted for the grand plan, which was the result of their cogitations, and which must convince posterity that energy, wisdom, and

comprehensiveness of mind actuated their labours.

(3) The Secretary for home matters is a perfect gentleman; but his oratorical powers are not superlatively eloquent. The want of eloquence and argument is compensated by a redundance of solemnity, strikingly grand and awfully impressive. Indeed, so vast an influence had this quality over his auditors, that they embraced the plan, exclaiming, "How "grand!---Mark you that, Master Mathew! "A Committee!---Mark you that!"

(4) The gentlemen of the cloudy morning train also, it seems, caught the alarm; and, poor souls! well they might: for can there be any thing more distressing than to disturb the *sleeping nights* of a class of crazy old hulks, and to set a Committee to watch their motions, to pry into their private concerns, and inspect their boxes!

(5) STATE WATCHMEN seemeth a good idea, and the author seemeth too to understand the trim of each watchman, and to apportion to each his particular duty. If parish watchmen, God wot the mark! had been as duly selected, there would not now have arisen occasion for

troubling the *waking* moments of the Secretary and his colleagues.

(6) The idea of refreshing them with some of the Patriot's "*entire*," is well conceived, whether they will relish his arguments is another matter: but reform to robbers is a topic which is not much to their *taste*.

(7) The gallant Captain, placed in "*a broken sedan*," will be more at his ease than in MALTA, when the officers were conveying him in a broken one to gaol. The *Proctors* would be alarmed if his Lordship should be appointed to *watch* in Doctors' *Commons!*

(8) "*The Turkey Fig*" beareth the emblems of two sorts of qualities:—First, that of the quality or condition of a *Grocer!*—Secondly, of the quality or condition of the heart, namely, that he doth not care a *fig* for all the robbers in Christendom!

(9) This most respectable gentleman is proverbially known for the independence of his principles, and for his great financial knowledge. Though now declining into the vale, he still retains sufficient nerve to *watch* the STATE.

(10) The combined qualities which *the Gunpowder Merchant* inherits, as a Dramatist and Statesman, eminently fit him for the station to which the Author very appropriately hath appointed him. Should rogues appear, a proper portion of his *own shot*, which may be set fire to with the tag-ends of some of his Prologues and Epilogues, might have some effect in scaring them away.

(11) On some occasion, some years past, the paternal ancestor of this *great personage* boasted that *he* had a stake in the country which would compel him to fight for its preservation.—" Aye," said a certain witty Senator, (I believe Courtenay); " that *stake* was " plucked out of the PUBLIC HEDGE!!!"

(12) No man exhibits greater anxiety for the public weal than " honest George R-se." Indeed, when asserting any thing in argument, he most *piously* appeals to the DIVINE Author of our being for the truth of his assertion. *Credat*, &c. !

(13) Sir Thomas *promised* 100*l.* reward for the apprehension of a certain Member of the Legislature. When A-k-ns, the Bow-street Thief-taker, applied for the reward, the worthy Knight excused himself from the payment, by *demurring legally*, and put in a plea, alledging that one Master J——, an At-

torney, was the constable. Upon the matter being mentioned to Justice N——s by the *Taker*, " Let it rest ! Let it rest!" said the accommodating Magistrate ; " recollect he may " do *us* harm ! !!"

(14) A contract for *oil* would not be a disagreeable notification from Government to this *oil merchant.* London is a large and populous city, and suburbs added thereto, would make it a good thing.

(15) By a *legal* appointment, the General guards the celebrated Lady, once notorious for her amour with Royalty.

(16) Among the ecentricities of this Sussex c——f, wonder would not cease, should any of the *Rogues* attempt to *speak*, if Jack seized *a chair* and knocked the *Speaker* down ! ! !

(17) As the present war is one for *British rights*,—it is proposed that the *Yarmouth* fly should be sent to *Wales*, where his *horn* might be sounded with some effect.

(18) Between *two stools* the bottom of the SETTER comes to the *ground.* So it may turn out, when the New Administration is formed, and George may not find *a place* any where else.

(19) It is said *Paddy* was once a great *friend* to the *Catholic* cause. Time alters the senti-

ments of many men, as well as their *religious* opinions!

(20) To *appease* the storm, in any country, nothing is so sure to effect the purpose as an *intemperate address*!!!

(21) This Baronet is, indeed, a STATE WATCHMAN!

(22) If wit, if eloquence, if probity, be recommendations to state appointments, then may SHERIDAN claim a right to guard over his property.

(23) No doubt the rogues would like the Treasury key; "but then," saith the Author, "the "gentle Secretary is only to *present* it," he can fire too!

(24) It is much to be lamented, that the *poetic genius* of this Gentleman hath not been exerted on the occasion of these state alarms.

(25) Indefatigable in endeavouring to œconomise both at *home* and *abroad!*

(26) The approach of this respected and respectable person might produce some good.

(27) What an admirable opportunity for promoting the Colonel!—He would be quite at home—Commander in Chief over—the *rogues!*

(28 and 29) Once it so happened, that by mistake, Mr. Mathew Montague, *a little Gentleman*, was taken for the *great* General Montague Mathew.—The General, with good hu-

mour, rectified, in a certain Assembly, the error; observing, in allusion to the names and the Persons—" Why, Sir, there is as much " difference as between a *Horse Chesnut* and a " *Chesnut Horse!!!*"

(30) What a charming idea in these times of retrenchment—*Advice gratis!*—Every one recollects the gratuitous advice which the learned Gentleman gave to his patron, the Royalist —and every one recollects, that the Royalist *lost* his cause; but then, as the late Counsellor Fazakerly once said to a *friend*, on being reproached with giving bad advice to him *gratis*; " Aye, my friend, but that was *travellin,r* advice." So was the advice of the " *First Man.*" It sent the Royalist on *his travel*, from Whitehall to Oatlands!

THE END

W. Flint, Printer, Old Bailey, Lond

LETTRE

DE

JÉROME POINTU,

SUR LE PROCÈS DE LA REINE D'ANGLETERRE.

LETTRE
DE
JÉROME POINTU,
FORT AU CHARBON,
A JÉROME L'ÉVEILLÉ,
FORT A LA HALLE,
SUR LE PROCÈS DE LA REINE D'ANGLETERRE.

Pot-pourri,
Prosaï-versi-comique.



A PARIS,
CHEZ LES ÉDITEURS, DUPREZ ET PROVENCE,
RUE CHRISTINE, N° 8.

1820.

LETTRE
DE
JÉROME POINTU.

Paris, ce.... Ma foi comme on voudra.

Mon ami et Confrère en différens genres.

J'écrivons cette vétille par l'effet d'une circonstance qu'est venue comm' par l'hasard à la suite d'un événement. J'passions laut' matin su l'quai aux Fleurs. J'portions l'vrai sac sur la tête et encore autre chose; et j'donnions (tête baissée), dans l'cours d'nos idées d'imagination, politiq'ment parlant, quand j'vimes par aventure, un joli p'tit cahier par terre; et j'dimes: il faut qu'il z'ait joliment d'la vogue, puis qu'on en trouve comme ça! Je l'ramassâmes, ben entendu.... Tudieu! c'est l'ami Jérôme l'Éveillé qu'a z'écrit! F'aut lire. A bas l'sac; je m'planque sur une borne: j'parcours et j'vis comme trente-six mille bossus. Mais v'là-t-i pas qu'la démangeaison d'l'envie d'é

crire m'travaille! J'empogne un bout d'charbon que j'taille, et j'commence comme qui suit, par l'canal d'mon imaginative.

Air : *J'arrive à pied de province.*

Quand j'eum's lu par aventure,
Jérôm' l'Éveillé;
Que j'ons r'connu l'écriture,
J'fum's émerveillé;
Et je m'somm's dit vail-que-vaille,
Dans c't'occasion-ci,
Faut, Pointu que tu rimaille
Un couplet z'aussi.

Puisque j'ons commencé, j'poursuivons, et comme je d'vons l'honneur au sexe, j'allons céder l'pas à la reine.

Air : *Des trembleurs.*

Oui, la reine d'Angleterre,
Fit voir en courant la terre
Un sistêm' très-salutaire,
Que l'économi' dicta;
Car, tout seul, pour son affaire,
Courrier, chamb'lan dignitaire,
Sans compter c'qu'est du mistère,
Pour ell' Bergami fit ça.

V'là d'l'économie!... En parlant de Bergami: quel coco que c'cadet-là? J'espère!

Air : *Du pas redoublé.*

Oui j'admire de Bergami
Z'et le fil et l'adresse ;
Il n'travaillait pas à demi,
Tudieu ! quelle vîtesse !
Mais c'qui tant soit peu m'déconfit,
C'est qu'pour remplir son poste,
C'était presque toujours dans l'lit,
Que l'sir' courait la poste.

A c'qu'on a dit du moins. Le monde est si méchant, qui ne faut, comme disait c'tautre, croire jamais qu'la moitié de c'qu'on dit. Mais aussi pourquoi le roi d'Angleterre a-t-il voulu tous ces cancans. J'nons pas été si bêtes au vis-à-vis d'nos parsonnières. Heim ?

Air : *En avant Fanfan la Tulipe.*

Puisqu'il est r'connu qu'un homme,
Cheux nous quand il est cornard ;
Par la d'sus doit faire un somme
Et surtout ne pas [illegible]'bavard ;
Pourquoi donc le grand roi d'Angleterre,
Qu'avait voulu tout gober aux Français,
N'a-t-il donc pas pri',
D'not' espri',
L'bon parti
De se taire,
Et' cocu c'est ben assez j'espère,
Pourquoi don' fair' tant de carillon.

Mais c'sont les *Goddams* qui sont contents de c't'affaire là ! Les vois-tu rire ?.... Comme des vilains. Quoique ça le roi n'en veut pas démordre pas pour cent boulets d'canon ; avec ça, lui qu'est si guerrier !

Air : *Depuis long-tems je tambourine.*

Je ne sais c'qu'a l'roi dans c'taffaire,
Par son envi' d'être cornu ;
Quoique couronné le compère,
Paraît las d'avoir le front nu.

Tant pis pour lui, j'men bats l'œil ; mais c'est pour c'te pauvre reine qu'en voit des grises dans c'procès qui finira, comment ?

J'ignore, mais, quand dans les salles,
On siffle tant de mots scandaleux,
J'disons pour la princesse d'Galles,
Qu'cest un procès bien galleux. (*bis.*)

Et j'ten réponds, moi qui n'suis pas de c'pays-là. C'qui m'en plait, c'est qu'tout en s'faisant rire de lui sous toute la calotte des cieux, il ne jette pas mal un p'tit sac de ridicules sur les lords *Rostbefs* et la nation sentimentale des *Plum puddings* : c'est ce que j'vais t'prouver.

Air : *Heureux comme on est à Paris.*

Puis qu'il est vrai qu'à la couronne,
La reine a ses prétentions ;
Qu'alle est mariée au peuple, au trône :
Pourquoi tant d'injurations ?
C'est qu'le roi n'veut pas (ce me semble),
Etre seul cocu dans l'procès :
Il veut que son peup' lui ressemble. (*bis.*)
Et fair' cocus tous les Anglais. (*quat.*)

Il a joliment d'la bonté ; qu'est-ce qu'en dit Jérôme ? Mais y pourrait p'têt' ben lui z'en cuire, et ça pas pu tard que bientôt : on ne se moque pas du peup' comme çà.

Air : *Tu me dis toujours des sottises.*

Par Hélen' de triste mémoire,
Je vis mettre en cendre Irion ;
Par un' Reine d'chanceuse gloire,
On peut voir griller Albion.

Quoiqu'il n'manque pas d'eau encore. C'est vexant, tout d'même, pour les *Bifftecks*, d'être dans c'cas-ci.

Car tu vas me rendre justice.
Faut-il qu'un peup' souffre encor',
Pour une princesse qui glisse,
Ou pour un roi qu'entre au grand cor'... (*bis.*)

Tout d'même, je ressentons un p'tit mouvement de jouissance de tout çà, tant seulement qu'à cause que l'fameux lord Stanhop s'est permis d'blaguer sur not' compte, et d'dire que j'étions démoralisés et que j'nétions plus dignes d'être Français ! Mille tonnères ! Les Anglais voudraient nous mistisier !

Air : *Du Faubourien.*

Qu'un certain jour l'instant vienne
Où's qu'il voudrait nous vexer :
Dans l'genre à la faubourienne,
Comm' j'voudrions les boxer !
J'leux ferions voir sans scandale,
C'qu'est encor l'peup' français ;
Et dans l'stil' à la brutale,
J'finirions vîte c'procès.
En abordant leurs cliques,
Ce s'rait à coups de triques.
Qu'j'leux'frais voir,
Sans miroir,
Comm' j'faisons le d'voir.

Et d'une façon un peu soignée et à nous seul connue. Mais puisqu'ils ont cancanné sur nous autres, un p'tit brin de revanche ne serait pas mal, j'crois. Je n'garantis pas c'que j'vais dire comme aurthentique. J'lons entendu dire et pis

c'est tout. C'est un *on dit*, qui dit que c'est d'après ça que le roi d'la Grande Bretagne s'est résolu à faire poursuivre la reine, pardevant les lords compétents dans c'taffaire-là, attendu qu'ils s'y connaissaient parfaitement et qu'ils pourraient fort bien en juger par eux-mêmes, étant experts en pareils cas. Voici donc c'que j'avons appris. *Honni soit, qui mal y pense.*

Air : *Le bon roi Dagobert.*

Le noble *Vilainton* *,
Prenant un lamentable ton ;
Dit l'aut' jour au roi :
Sire, croyez-moi,
Vous êtes cocu,
J'en suis convaincu.
Goddam ! lui dit le roi,
J'somm's donc dans l'même cas que toi ?

Le noble lord *Pique-droit* fait une grimace de tous les diables, et dit :

Oui, sir', j'en porte au front,
Mais garderez-vous cet affront
Si vous m'en croyez,
Vous vous vengerez,
Par un coup d'éclat,
D'un tel attentat :
J'veux ben, lui dit le roi,
Viens donc te venger, moi z'et toi.

* Wellington.

A cette nouvelle, lord Exmouth qui craint que tous les pairs du pays ne soient forcés, pour prendre le bon genre, de s'venger aussi, court tout essoufflé chez le roi, pour chercher à lui couler en douceur dans l'oreille, du côté du cœur, et qu'est bien le meilleur, un p'tit bout de r'présentation touchant l'article qu'on voulait ouvrir dans l'grand dictionnaire, sur le chapitre C. Voici comme on raconte qu'on dit qu'ça s'est dit.

Air : *Du Curé de Pompone.*

Lord Exmouth s'en va dire au roi,
Sire, qu'allez vous faire ?
Vous nous jettez tous dans l'effroi ;
Quel coup pour l'Angleterre !
Ponrquoi vouloir être cocu ?
Songez au diadême !
T'es fou, dit le roi, z'évacu ;
J'veux êt' cocu... *quand'même !*

Comme il n'y avait rien à siffler après çà, lord *Rembarré* tira ses guêtres et dissimula pour mieux feindre, en prenant l'parti d'la reine. Mais j'crois que j'ten avons déjà assez dit sur c'te bambochelà. J'navons plus qu'à te sonner un p'tit mot sur nos réflexions, qu'jons faites dans la valiscence de not' imagination.

Air : *Je loge au quatrième étage.*

Je démêle dans cette cause,
Queuque chos'qui f'rait rir', ma foi,
Si par un coup d'métamorphose,
Chacun d'nous allait être roi ! (*bis.*)
Sitôt qu'jprenderions les rênes,
De not' nouveau gouvernement ;
Si pour çà je citions nos reines,
Que de procès sous l'firmament. (*bis.*)

Ah ! j'en verrions des cancans et des souverains à la diable ; et des *sacs jaunes*, et des *sacs verts*, et des *sacs* de toutes les couleurs. Ah ! mon dieu, quel charivari, quel' cacaphronie ! A propos ; il faut que j'te passe une p'tite idée en carembourg dans l'genre d'une partie d'jeu d'mots.

Air : *Comme on fait son lit on se couche.*

L'un en voyant l'fameux *sac vert*,
Prétend qu'il vaudrait mieux en jaune ;
L'autre soutient à découvert,
Qu'on n voit déjà trop su' l'trône.
Pour moi je n'vois dans tout c'mic-mac,
Qu'une chose, mais qu'est certaine ;
C'est que l'roi s'est mis dans un sac,
D'aut' couleur que celui d'la reine.

Ah ! l'brave prince ! il met la reine au vert et lui se garde la couleur de *lune effarée*. Ah ! comme

il s'connait en couleurs ! A propos, pour t'en finir, j'men vais terminer ce galimathias, qui tient d'l'amphigourique et d'la blague, par te dire ce que tu sais déjà mieux qu'moi : c'est la manière leste et facile, comme quoi l'fanfan *Bergami* s'est insinué dans les bonnes grâces du vis-à-vis d'la reine ; et comment, ainsi qu'tu l'dis si bien, il a su faire claquer son fouet.

J'ai tiré l'air de *Cendrillon* pour t'arranger çà d'ssus, parce qu'un air innocent convient parfaitement à cela. Vois-tu, c'est pour qu'la critique n'prenne pas, puisque nous autres, nous sommes convenus qu'l'air faisait la chanson. J'commence par finir, et j'aurons bientôt fait.

Air : *De Guilleri.*

Il était un grand homme,
Qui s'nommait Bergami.
Biribi ;
Bien taillé pour la course ;
Pour la course aux brebis.
Carabi,
Bon dos,
Carabo,
Bon d'vant,
Caraban :

Compère Bergami,
C'est ce qui fit, (*bis*)
Qu'il fit tout c'qui s'en suit.

Bien taillé pour la course;
Pour la course aux brebis,
Biribi.
Un jour il vit la reine,
La reine l'vit aussi,
Carabi;
Son dos,
Carabo,
Son d'vant,
Caraban,
Compère Bergami;
C'est ce qui fit (*bis.*)
Qu'en poste ell' s'en servit.

Et la *comique* dit dans un genre mousseux.

Un jour il vit la reine,
La reine l'vit aussi,
Biribi.
Il fut chevalie' *d'suite*,
Chambellan s'en suivit,
Carabi;
C'est l'dos,
Carabo,
Le d'vant,

PRICE EIGHTEEN PENCE.

Caraban,
Compère Bergami.
C'est l'dos qui fit ; le d'vant qui fit,
Qu'on fit ce qu'on en dit.

Je n'te cautionne pourtant pas tout ça ; mais c'que j'tassure, c'est qu'mon bout d'charbon est à bout ; et que j'nai plus que l'temps d'être, comme au bas de trente-six mille lettres :

JÉRÔME POINTU.

Au Pour au Charboy,

A JÉROME POINTU,

Si y a réponse.

IMPRIMERIE DE BRASSEUR AINÉ.

Fourth Edition.

Suppressed Evidence;

OR,

R——l Intriguing:

BEING

THE HISTORY

OF A

Courtship, Marriage and Separation,

EXEMPLIFIED IN THE FATE OF

The PRINCESS of -----.

TOGETHER WITH
A PARTICULAR ACCOUNT OF THOSE CHARACTERS
WHICH IMMEDIATELY LED TO IT.

COMPRISING THE HITHERTO UNKNOWN MYSTERIES OF
" MY OWN MEMOIRS."

By P——— P———, Poft Laureat,

Author of "R—L STRIPES,"—(suppressed.)

" The story Truth now brings to light
Has long, *too long*, lain hid in night,
But she, bright goddess, shall reveal it;
And though *My Lord* his head may shake,
By Jupiter! I would not take
Five hundred [illegible] to conceal it "

London;
PUBLISHED BY E. WILSON, 88, CORNHILL.
PRINTED BY G. HAZARD, XLIX, BEECH-STR.
1813.
PRICE EIGHTEEN PENCE.

A POEM, &c.

I.

Angels, and ministers of grace, defend us
From *ex-officio* writs tremendous!
From GARROW, PLOMER, and *Judge* GIBBS.
I've got a tale, whose lightest part
Will freeze thy blood, distract thy heart,
And make it knock against thy ribs!

II.

Attend unto it's secret birth,
Ye Kings, and Princes of the earth!
Ye mortals both above, and under us;
No tale of demons, ghosts, and caverns,
Or bloods in scuffles kill'd at taverns,
Is half so dreadful, dark, and wond'rous!

III.

The story, Truth now brings to light,
Has long, *too long*, lain hid in night,
But she, bright goddess, shall reveal it;
And tho' *my Lord* his head may shake,
By Jupiter, I would not take
Five hundred guineas to conceal it!

IV.

In ancient times, when freedom smil'd
On GOTHAM's favor'd prosp'rous land,
When cheerfully the ploughman toil'd,
And plenty blest his lab'ring hand,

V.

There reign'd a PRINCE, a noble youth,
Whose praises oft' were loudly caroll'd,
Pattern of constancy and truth,
Not like that idle rogue, "*Childe Harold*,"
Who to *reform* would ne'er begin,
'Till it grew *troublesome* to sin.

VI.

His court was fill'd with beauteous dames,
Who burn'd with Cupid's fiercest flames,
I wish I could disclose their names,
Tho' that perhaps might breed some tattle;

Suffice it, that the nymphs who burn'd,
Had all their passions well return'd,
By chiefs who much applause had earn'd,
In various bloody fields of battle.

VII.

No harricot, or French ragout,
No dainty hash, delicious stew,
No fish that swam, no bird that flew,
But grac'd his free and plenteous table;
Good fellowship and glorious cheer,
In GOTHAM reign'd throughout the year,
And guests were all invited here,
To cram as long as they were able.

VIII.

Bright sparkling draughts of gen'rous wine,
That fill the soul with thoughts divine,
And manly hearts to love incline,
Inspir'd the chiefs with deeds of arms;
While many a toast would conquer those
Who ne'er were conquer'd by their foes,
Undaunted men! who live on blows,
And thrive the best 'midst war's alarms.

IX.

Nor did sweet music's softer power
Refuse to crown the festive hour,
Apollo left his sacred bower,
To fill with harmony the scene;

Some tender soft and plaintive air,
Which spoke the lover's anxious care,
Alternate hope, and deep despair,
With dying symphonies between.

X.

The airy dance and jovial song,
By turns solac'd the courtly throng,
And merrily they tripp'd along
To hautboy dulcimer and fiddle:
While some to give their wit a handle,
Sat down to chocolate and scandal,
Conundrum, forfeit, jest, and riddle.

XI.

And I might tell, as bards have done—
Of those that lost, and those that won,
How many curs'd the morning sun,
(Such curses heav'n ne'er bring upon us!)
How fair ones took their partners in,
(A common case with those who win,)
And lady ROUNDABOUT M'FLINN
Was six by cards, and four by honors.

XII.

It was propos'd at council board,
By many a sage, and many a lord,
Who GOTHAM, and it's PRINCE ador'd,
That some FAIR NYMPH of honor peerless

Should glad their monarch's royal arms,
And fill his breast with fond alarms,
As life unbless'd with beauty's charms,
Is dreary, barren, cold, and cheerless.

XIII.

Twelve noble peers in robes of state,
Exulting sought the palace gate,
Big with the kingdom's future fate,
(For which, good souls! they were assembled:)
In solemn pace they march'd along,
With wigs magnificently long,
Amazement seiz'd the vulgar throng,
They gaz'd with awe, with fear they trembled.

XIV.

Thrice did these loyal men of wonder
Assail the gate, with knocks like thunder,
Which at their bidding flew asunder:
And now the palace yard they enter;
In time they reach the council hall,
Where fifty yeoman stout and tall,
Stood ready, at their prince's call,
Whose throne imperial grac'd the centre.

XV.

So low they kneel'd with awe profound,
Their huge full-bottoms swept the ground,
With duty, rev'rence, and submission;
But soon encourag'd by His Highness,

They with true magisterial dryness
Disclos'd the object of their mission.

XVI.

The PRINCE he started, gap'd, look'd weazen,
The nobles with sufficient reason,
Were fearful they had utter'd treason,
And whispering "Sure the PRINCE will scold us!"
Besought in supplicating strain,
Their heads might not be cut in twain,
But be permitted to remain
Just where they stood—upon their shoulders.

XVII.

Loud laugh'd the PRINCE to hear them croak,
HIS HIGHNESS much enjoy'd the joke,
And thus in gentle accents spoke,
"Good gentlemen! may I be pounded
In some apothecary's mortar,
Or stand up, by the head the shorter,
Be kill'd by land, or drown'd by water,
But that your fears are idly grounded.

XVIII.

'Tis true, I started and was dumb,
To see your rev'rend worships come
Upon an embassy *so rum*,
With long bag-wigs, and robes of ermine;

And, (to add comfort to my life)
Beseech me thus to take a *wife*,
(Heav'n guard me from the nuptial strife!)
A thing I ne'er could yet determine.

XIX.

" For women are such noisy cattle,
Their pretty tongues go tittle tattle,
Just like a fine three-farthing rattle,
Which we may buy at fair of Bart'lemy;
And then the thought is most appalling,
Of wives hallooing, children squalling,
Such matrimonial caterwauling
I think is quite enough to startle me.

XX.

" And then you'll own (for nought more sure is,)
That ladies tho' in beauty *houries*,
In temper may be downright *furies*,
And make their husbands in the room sticks;
And in the sight of ev'ry neighbour,
Their backs indignantly belabor,
And make them dance without a tabor,
To little *instruments* call'd *broomsticks*.

XXI.

" And tell me, nobles, would it pleasure ye
To see me rob the royal treasury,

To furnish this expensive goddess?
For she must have her caps, and veils,
Her furbelows, and farthingales,
Her golden stomacher, and bodice.

XXII.

"And she must have her box of paint,
Or else her ladyship would faint,
Swear you were stingy, I were cruel;
And then (good people, have compassion!)
In some accursed whim of fashion,
She'd sell my kingdom for a jewel.

XXIII.

"And she must have quite snug and handy,
A private thimble-full of brandy,
To cure the mulligrubs, so stitching;
And, though a nymph of peerless honor,
The habit p'r'aps may steal upon her,
For liquor's mightily bewitching.

XXIV.

"And sure 'twould shock my tender feeling
To see her Majesty a-reeling,
Drunk as the sow of good King David;
And if (an accident not rare,)
My royal wife should curse and swear,
Lord, how the multitude would stare,
To see their Queen so ill-behaved!

XXV.

" And she must have to wait upon her,
Grooms, pages, aye, and maids of honor,
A mob impertinent and lazy;
And then a coxcomb hot from France
To teach her gracefully to dance,
Or curl and dress her auburn jazey.

XXVI.

" And she must have her balls and plays,
And chambermaids to lace her stays,
And birth-day suits for gala days,
Hoop-petticoats, and silks and flounces;
And then to make her sweet and fair,
Three pound of powder in her hair,
Pomatum, *Russia oil*, so rare,
And *huile antique*, full twenty ounces.

XXVII.

" Besides some pompous *poor relation*
To steal my cash, and starve my nation,
Who'd of my subjects match the tallest;
While some huge whisker'd *German chief*
Will swallow me *six pounds of beef*,
And prove his stomach *not the smallest*.

XXVIII.

" And sure such vile infernal cramming
In GOTHAM's land would breed a famine,

Or else I'm grievously mistaken;
And 'twould much discontent produce
To give *five shillings* for a goose,
Or *six-pence* for a pound of bacon.

XXIX.

" And if ('tis no impossibility,)
This lovely pattern of gentility,
To prove herself of *true nobility*,
When in the marriage noose we're buckled,
(It is an ill which most I fear,
As women's taste is sometimes queer,)
Should fancy some tall grenadier,
And make your faithful PRINCE a *cuckold*.

XXX.

" Lord, how the boys would hoot, and hollo,
The fishwomen my footsteps follow,
E'en the blind children of Apollo
Would pester me with filthy ditties;
While some with bowels of compassion,
As horns are " so much the fashion,
Perhaps would moderate their passion,
And cry, " *Oh! 'tis a thousand pities*."

XXXI.

" Now though with love the sex may tickle us,
I think it mightily ridiculous

That men of sense should thus be duped;
And tho' I'm gallant to the marrow,
I ne'er was wounded by the arrow
Of that sly vagabond, young *Cupid*.

XXXII.

" Such ills must surely have great weight
To warn me from the marriage state,
For they in time might prove my own;
And you perhaps would rue the hour
A faithless woman shar'd the power
Of GOTHAM'S PRINCE, and GOTHAM'S THRONE.

XXXIII.

" But still, if I could chance to meet
A nymph with every grace replete,
In mind and body, quite complete,
I promise—by the foot of Pharaoh,
That, vanquish'd by her matchless charms,
Dispelling all these dread alarms,
And rushing to her virgin arms
I'd wed her—and be proud to wear her."

XXXIV.

Thus spake the PRINCE—as I have sung—
The hall with acclamation rung,
His praises dwelt on ev'ry tongue,

His eloquence was past resistance;
" *Heaven bless his Highness!*" was the call,
From young, and old—from great and small,
The words re-echoed through the hall,
And folks could hear at ten miles distance.

XXXV.

When lo! a voice was heard to say
" Great Monarch, whom we all obey,
Thrice blessed be the happy day
That thus confirms our humble claim!—
A *peerless damsel* we have found
For all these virtues much renown'd,
She dwells far hence on *foreign ground*,
And CAROLINA is her name.

XXXVI.

" No princess can with her compare,
Her mind is as her body fair,
For ev'ry charm is center'd there,
That man can love, and heart desire;
Her beauteous form and winning grace,
On GOTHAM'S throne deserve a place,
And truly noble is her race,
A dauntless monarch is her sire.

XXXVII.

" For her our ships shall cross the seas,
And boldly face the northern breeze,

To fetch the nymph whom all adore;
May gentle winds, and prosperous gales
Impel the waves, and fill the sails,
And waft her safe to GOTHAM's shore."

XXXVIII.

One tedious moon in silence pass'd,
The happy day arriv'd at last,
That all their anxious wishes crown'd;
The Prince beheld the lovely dame,
Her beauty soon his heart o'ercame,
And feeling both a mutual flame,
In HYMEN's silken chains were bound.

XXXIX.

And now descend, ye tuneful Choir,
The poet's towering verse inspire,
And O! impart your sacred fire
And make him equal to the theme:
Let gay description's lively hand
The hymeneal scene expand,
Sublime, magnificent, and grand,
More beauteous than a fairy dream.

XL.

The morn was bright—the radiant sun
In joy his daily course begun,

And smil'd upon the royal pair;
The warbling birds on every spray
With music usher'd in the day,
And sweetest flowers perfum'd the air.

XLI.

The merry bells rang loud and strong,
And hail'd them as they pass'd along,
Nor were the drums and trumpets mute;
Twelve virgins in apparel neat,
Strew'd pinks and roses 'neath their feet,
And minstrels touch'd the harp and lute.

XLII.

Two hundred horsemen rode in sight,
On milk-white steeds, in armour bright,
With lances ready for the fight,
Which mock'd the sun's meridian rays:
Fair GOTHAM's nobles grac'd the scene,
And ladies all superbly sheen,
In honor to their king and queen,
Appear'd in grandeur's brightest blaze.

XLIII.

The PRINCE in costly robes was drest,
A diamond glitter'd on his breast,
The crown his royal temples prest,

Th' imperial crown of Gotham's land;
The sword of state a herald bore,
Who rode triumphantly before,
But *that of peace* the monarch wore,
The princely sceptre grac'd his hand.

XLIV.

And next him sat his YOUTHFUL BRIDE,
A blooming nymph, in beauty's pride,
To truth and modesty allied,
The star that most adorn'd his throne:
Her rich attire, majestic mien,
And graceful air, bespoke the queen,
Gems, rubies, on her dress were seen,
And India's brightest diamonds shone.

XLV.

And now the trumpet's brazen throat,
Pours forth a loud and warlike note,
And minstrels sweep the tuneful string;
A thousand voices rend the air,
They loudly bless the royal pair,
And thus their hymeneals sing.

Hymeneal.

XLVI.

Hail to the BRIDE with her golden lac'd stomacher,
Breathing delightful Arabia's perfume!
And hail to the PRINCE who'll triumphantly rummage her,
Grac'd with his gorget, and high-waving plume.
Matchless is HE, for good sense and politeness,
Her sparkling eyes are unrivall'd for brightness,
And fam'd in the dance is her foot for it's lightness,
Long may they reign in health, beauty, and bloom!

XLVII.

Strike up the tabors! and let us have noise enough,
Bless their dear faces! how sweetly they smile;
Tight little Hymen will soon bring 'em boys enough,
The glory, the boast, and the pride of our isle!

Skip it, and trip it, in merry cotillion O!
A day like the present, is sure worth a million O!
See how they gallop, for Cupid's postillion O!
Wriggling, and giggling and blushing the while!

LXVIII.

Ten thousand men with streamers gay
Loud cheering, clos'd the long array,
And hail'd with joy th'auspicious day
That rose so full of cheering beams:
Nor did sweet mirth resign his power
In homely cot, or lordly tower,
'Till sleep stole on the festive hour,
Which soon return'd in pleasing dreams.

LXIX.

A year roll'd on—and scarcely more—
The *Queen a smiling Cherub bore,*
(And now the Muse would fain be dumb:)
Ah! little thought she 'twas her last,
That grief would soon her life o'ercast,
Her hours of happiness were past,
Her days of sorrow all to come.

L.

In GOTHAM'S *court there liv'd a Dame,*
Who (void of grace remorse, and shame,)
Burn'd with a foul, unhallow'd flame,
And one, whom scandal oft' would peck at:
The Furies saw her youthful mind
To lust, and infamy inclin'd,
They form'd her well to plague mankind,
And call'd the bellweather—*Fitzhecat.*

LI.

Her face, which marks of beauty bore,
Was now with wrinkles furrow'd o'er,
And on her breast a *cross* she wore.
Tho' stain'd with guilt, and foul within:
Her locks were *grey*—her eyes were *dim*—
Palsy had seiz'd each tottering limb,
Eye scarce beheld a form so grim,
Sad monument of *death and sin.*

LII.

Her artful leer, and wanton air,
(Tho' time had silver'd ev'ry hair,)
Bespoke the *harlot* still was there,
The verriest hag of Cyprian shade;

And while her num'rous *beads* she t...,
Her *blinking eyes* lascivious roll'd,
For she was *amorous*, tho' *old*,
And thought of *coxcombs* while she *pray'd*.

LIII.

Each rising morn, the courtly beaux,
With flaxen wig—and birth-day cloaths,
And borrow'd teeth in ivory rows,
She strove to charm—what pious knavery!
Her eye-brows artfully were plac'd,
Her wither'd cheeks bedaub'd with taste,
Her wrinkles well fill'd up with paste,
And scents she us'd for smells unsavory.

LIV.

She cast her eye on GOTHAM's Pride,
And envied much his lovely Bride,
And Satan's blackest arts she tried
To win him from her constant arms;
And many a pow'rful magic spell
The belldam knew, and practis'd well,
And GOTHAM's PRINCE untimely fell
A victim to her fiendlike charms.

LV.

His court a scene of vice became,
And crimes too horrible to name
In GOTHAM's land were held no shame,
In male or female, prince or peer;
The *grey Seducer*, curst of God,
Receiv'd the PRINCE's smile and nod,
He held a *white official rod*,
And poison'd oft' the monarch's ear.

LVI.

Husbands would prostitute their *wives*,
To live like courtiers all their lives,
(When folly rules, injustice thrives,
For one's base interest is the other's:)
FITZHECAT reign'd with one accord
O'er *mistress*, *people*, *prince*, and *lord*,
Supreme *procuress*, *queen*, and *bawd*,
And *sons* were found to sell their *mothers*.

LVII.

The LAWS, which GOTHAM's bulwark stood,
For which she'd shed her bravest blood,
Attorneys vile betray'd in court;
Her *judges*, truth and wisdom lack'd,
Her *juries* all were basely pack'd,
And *oaths*, and *verdicts* held in sport.

LVIII.

Poor scribbling rogues (there hangs a tale)
Were banish'd to some *distant jail*,
 Because they told *plain truths*, call'd *libels!*
And plund'rers, of no small dimensions
Were granted *sinecures* and *pensions*,
 And *plays* were more in vogue than *bibles*.

LIX.

Yet not FITZHERCAT's charms alone
Detach'd the MONARCH from his throne,
For him no virgin loos'd her zone,
 But view'd the profligate with heavings;
And GOTHAM's PRINCE in life's last stage,
To satisfy his amorous rage,
Took up with *ugliness and age*
His servants' worn out loathsome leavings.

LX.

There was a *portly nymph of sin*,
Whose *stomach* almost reach'd her *chin*,
Call'd LADY ROUNDABOUT M'FLINN,
 Of figure, face, and bulk, uncommon;
A graceless harlot run to seed,
Whom ev'ry one that saw, agreed,
Was surely of the *monster breed*,
 More a *hermaphrodite*, than *woman*.

LXI.

The PRINCE her husband's brows t' adorn,
Had planted there a golden horn,
And plac'd his lordship in the palace;
Where well-bred *cuckolds*, *pimps*, and *peers*,
And *letchers*, old in *sin*, and *years*,
Kept sinking GOTHAM in *arrears*,
Defying all the shafts of malice.

LXII.

Her credit sunk, her taxes rose,
She saw her sons borne down with woes,
Herself encompass'd by her foes,
Who brav'd her threats, her strength defied;
And GOTHAM, who triumphant bore
Her arms to ev'ry distant shore,
No longer heard her cannons roar,
Or saw her ships the ocean ride.

LXIII.

Her armies, fam'd for valor's meed,
She saw a weak commander lead,
Who ne'er achiev'd one warlike deed,
Or gave his country's foes a trimming;
A swaggering, proud, unwieldy lubber,
Well known for cowardice, and blubber,
And only fit to play a rubber
With simp'ring chiefs, or bilk the women.

LXIV.

Thus have I told in faithful rhymes,
(A warning to the present times)
How GOTHAM was debas'd by crimes
Of men, who held the highest stations;
And let no future bard proclaim
The direful story of her shame,
But may her lost, degraded name
Be blotted from the list of nations.

LXV.

Thrice happy BRITAIN! *favor'd isle,*
Where justice, peace, and plenty smile,
Thy praise demands my votive song;
Art thou, like Gotham, fall'n, accurst,
Plagu'd by a monarch deem'd the worst?—
Ah no! thy Prince by virtue nurs'd,
Abhors the mean, and vicious throng.

LXVI.

Thy court, for merit passing rare,
No gamesters, cuckolds, pimps, are there,
But gentle lords, and ladies fair,
Sipping their coffee, wine, and sherbet;
There's Y—m—th's lord, who from his birth
Has prov'd a miracle of worth,
And H—t—d, fairest nymph on earth,
Except that matchless star, Fitzherbert.

LXVII.

There's Headfort, Nature's choice production,
An enemy to base seduction,
The pink of dukes, of knights, and peers;
No wretch is he of pimping fame,
No hoary letcher, lost to shame,
Whose passions age can never tame,
But one whose virtues grace his years.

LXVIII.

And let me sing without rebuke,
The praises of each royal duke,
(Not like unhappy Gotham's gabies;)
But Princes who can write and read,
And emulous of glory's meed,
Of ev'ry vile dishonest deed
As innocent, as new-born babies.

LXIX.

And let me sing in nice rotation,
The num'rous worthies of the nation,
Whose fame smells sweetly, like geranium;
But hold—good folks—*for so much sense*
I can't afford for eighteen-pence,
You'd fancy I hold cheap, from thence,
The labors of my pericraneum.

LXX.

But yet again, in merry strain,
I'll prove Britannia's loyal herald;
Ye Muses fire me—ye Gods inspire me.
With stanzas worthy of FITZGERALD!

LXXI.

Heav'n bless the REGENT *and his Mother,*
Each SISTER, MINISTER, *and* BROTHER,
His DAUGHTER *more than any other;*
And grant her beauty, health, prosperity;
And THOU MY COUNTRY! *land divine*
Oh! ne'er may GOTHAM'S *fate be thine,*
Long may thy PRINCE *in* VIRTUE *shine*
And truly great, be proud to merit thee.

The End.

G. Hazard, Printer, Beech-Street, London.

TURNING OUT;

OR,

ST. S——'S IN AN UPROAR;

CONTAINING

Particulars of the Death and Resurrection

OF THE

HEAVEN-BORN MINISTERS;

OR, THE

Pilots that Weathered the Storm.

A POEM.

BY

PETER PINDAR, JUN.

Author of the Royal Bloods, and Royal Lover.

"Oh! *R—l G—e*, forgive these tears,
"We're out, Sir—out—yes, out of place;
"Men who have serv'd their K—g for years,
"Declar'd unfit, Oh! dire disgrace.

"The Whigs, dread Sir, have got the day,
"They fell upon us tooth and nail;
"Drove out the intrepid C——*r—gh*,
"And all the party at his tail."

London:

PUBLISHED BY EFFINGHAM WILSON, 88, CORNHILL.

1812.

PRICE ONE SHILLING AND SIX-PENCE.

PRINTED BY G. HAZARD, 49, BEECH-STREET.

A POEM, &c.

I.

The night was dark with clouds o'erspread,
The rain in torrents wash'd the ground,
Pale lightning glimmer'd over head,
And thunders peal'd a solemn sound:

II.

The house was met, the Speaker's wig
Hung o'er his shoulders on the chair,
The Ministers look'd wise and big,
And strove to drive away dull care—

III.

But all their efforts were in vain
To check the gloom which hover'd near,
Suppress the struggling sigh of pain,
Or stop th' involuntary tear.

IV.

Now all was hush'd throughout the place,
The candles shed a cheerless light;
Dejection sat on *R—d—'s* face,
Old *R—se* look'd miserably white.

V.

The virtuous *C——h* in vain
Strove to conceal his boding fears;
L—d P—lm—stone was fill'd with pain,
And *Van—t—t* dissolv'd in tears.

VI.

Sir *V——y*, Nature's sweetest child,
Whose tears have wash'd his sins away,
Was calm as summer skies, and mild
As morning in the month of May;

VII.

His ex-officio eyes were full
Of heavenly charity and love,
With courage equal to the bull,
And meekness copied from the dove.

VIII.

Poor *C'—k—r* trembl'd like a leaf
Shook by the raging autumn blast;
And *Y—ke* look'd paler than the thief
Who meets his just reward at last.

IX.

The Whigs beheld their evil plight,
Their scowling eyes and faces grim,
They saw with mischievous delight,
The party cou'd no longer swim.

X.

Adventrous *St—a—t W——dy* rose,
Resolv'd to turn the Pittites out;
He struck a few decisive blows,
Which put them instantly to rout.

XI.

'Twas good to note the terror spread,
Like troops whose generals are slain,
Despairing see their leaders dead,
And breathless scour along the plain.

XII.

They quit the benches with dismay,
And in their hurry to depart,
Old *R—se* knock'd down *L—d C——h*,
And trampl'd over *Van—t—t*.

XIII.

V—ke, springing to avoid a fall,
Jump'd on the patient *V—y G—bs*,
Forc'd *W—l—y P—le* against the wall—
And bruis'd his ministerial ribs.

XIV.

Sir *V——y's* head assail'd the floor,
His jaws emit a crashing sound—
V—ke sigh'd, for what cou'd man do more;
And left him sprawling on the ground.

XV.

Off flew his nicely powder'd wig,
And shew'd a countenance as sweet,
As that strange animal a pig—
By school-boys worried thro' the street.

XVI.

In vain he call'd, and stretch'd his arms
The learned friends were deaf and blind,
His legal voice had lost its charms,
The big wigs never look'd behind.

XVII.

In vain the benches, doors, oppose,
To stop the current of their feet,
They trample over friends, and foes,
And quite exhauste gain the street.

XVIII.

Speechless a while, they stand and stare,
Like clients who have lost their cause,
They hear the verdict in despair—
And work their agonizing jaws.

XIX.

At length recover'd from surprise,
Old treasurer *R—se* thus spoke his mind—
" That *S——t W——y*, d—n his eyes,
I wish the hypocrite was blind:

XX.

" A sneaking cur, to turn about,
And fall upon his former friends,
Expecting in the general rout,
To pick up a few candle ends.

XXI.

" *L—d M—lton* too, that simple blade,
Whose fiery head consumes his brains,
Altho' he volunteer'd his aid,
Will get no credit for his pains.

XXII.

" His constitutents know too well,
The patriotic member's heart—
They've giv'n his L—dship five years spell,
And wish with all their souls to part.

XXIII.

" And that intriguing Foxite gang,
So confident of office grown—
I'd rather see those fellows hang,
Then let 'em pick a single bone.

XXIV.

" I notic'd every rascal's face,
Was cover'd with malicious glee,
An omen of the sad disgrace,
Which these old eyes have liv'd to see.

XXV.

" But come, my friends, no more delay,
'Tis weakness, childishness to rail,
Let us to *L—p—l*'s away—
And tell our melancholly tale."

XXVI.

They reach the house, his L—ship flies,
To meet the party at the door—
He reads his fate in *C—k—'s* eyes,
And breathless sinks upon the floor.

XXVII.

So falls the daisy in its prime,
By sturdy mowers laid along,
And thus the moving hand of time,
Cuts down the feeble and the strong.

XXVIII.

L—d E—n, overcome with fear,
Dropp'd by the fallen P—m—r's side;
And *C——h*, that spotless peer—
Burnt rags and hartshorn-drops apply'd.

XXIX.

At length his l—dship's friendly care,
With merited success was crown'd—
Returning motion blest the pair,
And both were lifted from the ground.

XXX.

With grief *the noble lord* beheld
His worthy friends upon the rack—
His breast with strong emotion swell'd,
And up he rear'd his *graceful* back.

XXXI.

" Oh friends!" he cried, " the hour is near,
Which parts us from the treasury nest—
Tears us from all of value here,
That all which made us richly blest.

XXXII.

" Fain would I dissipate the grief,
Which hangs on every member's face,
Fain would I offer you relief,
And blot out all the past disgrace;

XXXIII.

" But ah! our faithful friend is fled,
And left us here a wretched crew—
He now is numbered with the dead,
And oh, that we were number'd too.

XXXIV.

" For now no more shall *C——h*
Plan expeditions big with fate,
No more the war department sway,
Or help to save a sinking state.

XXXV.

" Adieu, ye dear delicious hours,
That bro't the fishes and the loaves—
Turn'd council-rooms to shady bowers,
And offices to orange groves.

XXXVI.

" Ye beds of roses, hide your charms,
I feel how bitter 'tis to part
With what so long has blest these arms,
And twin'd so closely round my heart."

XXXVII.

Whilst thus he spake, a hollow groan
Appear'd to issue from the floor,
And some one in a feeble tone,
Demanded entrance at the door.

XXXVIII.

The Lethbridge uproar seiz'd their heads,
And lifted all the lawyer's wigs;
So stands erect when terror spreads,
The hair upon a drove of pigs.

XXXIX.

Awhile they hesitating stand,
Irresolute what course to take;
At length 'twas vigorously plann'd,
(As every comfort was at stake,)

XL.

To throw the windows next the street
Wide open without more delay,
And thus secure a safe retreat
From lurking enemies that way:

XLI.

But ere they took so high a leap,
Down on the hard unmanner'd stones;
'Twas thought most politic to peep,
And save if possible their bones.

XLII.

L—d M—l—le strain'd his courtly eyes,
Close to a crevice in the door;—
"The ghost of Bellingham!" he cries,
Fell back, and cou'd not utter more.

XLIII.

Confusion mingl'd with the throng,
All to the open'd windows flew;
And *Har—by* the bold and strong,
Was foremost of the frighten'd crew:

XLIV.

" Hold! noble friends," cried *C——h;*
" Oh never let a rumour spread,
That ghosts have frighten'd us away,
And made the living fly the dead.

XLV.

" Myself will view this spectre's face,
Whose groans have terrified us all:
And thus prevent the sure disgrace,
That must upon our party fall."

XLVI.

He then his *flushing* face appli'd,
To save the trembling members' ribs,
And, reader, thro' the key-hole spied,
The much enduring *V—y G—s.*

XLVII.

His head with bandages was bound,
And different colors deck'd his face,
Each blood-shot eye was circled round,
With painful badges of disgrace.

XLVIII.

The bars and bolts were drawn aside,
To admit the counsel for the *C—n;*
Who enter'd robb'd of all his pride,
Bereft of hat, and wig, and gown.

XLIX.

" My l—ds and gentlemen," he cries,
" With shame behold me cover'd o'er,
Nay, start not, nor affect surprise,
To see me bleeding, maim'd, and sore;

L.

" You are the authors of my fall,
And if you will not do me right,
Dam'me if I don't *law* you all,
And serve the *notices* to-night.

LI.

" The damages sustain'd are great—
Your verdict, gentlemen, I claim.
Procure me 'ere it be too late,
A *J—g—'s* wig to hide my shame;

LII.

" Do it whilst you possess the power,
Nor waste the minutes with delay;
For ah! another fleeting hour
May snatch ability away."

LIII.

He paus'd, and totter'd to a seat.
L—d L—p—l directly rose,
And thus in accents soft and sweet,
Address'd the legal man of woes:—

LIV.

" *G—bs*, 'tis a most afflicting sight
And cuts my poor heart thro' and thro'
To witness in this dismal plight
An honest worthy soul like you.

LV.

" Dim are those eyes where lustre shone
Bright as the sun's unclouded ray,
Excell'd the diamond's sparkling stone,
And bore the brilliant palm away;

LVI.

" Sour'd is the sweetness of your voice
Which once was music to the ear;
Made the poor libeller's heart rejoice,
And banish'd from his bosom fear.

LVII.

" Disfigur'd is that lovely face,
That many a female breast has charm'd;
For ever fled the nameless grace
Which Envy of its sting disarm'd;

LVIII.

" Pale are those lips where sweetness hung,
And like the crimson ruby glow'd;
Swell'd and distorted is that tongue,
From which thy honey'd accents flow'd.

LIX.

" But tho' of outward charms bereft,
Your friends can still exulting say,
The riches of your mind is left,
Which none can give nor take away;

LX.

" I therefore willingly agree,
And promise in the council's name
To grant your unassuming plea,
If *G—e* will ratify the same.

LXI.

" Now let us, noble friends, depart,
And give our master back the reins;
Alas, I fear 'twill break my heart,
But not a glimpse of hope remains."

LXII.

With one accord they all obey,
Silent as mourners of the dead,
The fallen *P—m—r* leads the way
And many a bitter tear was shed.

LXIII.

Arriv'd before the palace gate,
The ready hinges open wide;
The staring lacquies wond'ring wait,
And usher them to England's pride.

LXIV.

The *P—e* with terror and surprise,
Beheld his servant's alter'd cases,
Their lengthen'd jaws, and hollow eyes,
Pale cheeks, and discontented faces.

LXV.

In vain he begg'd to know the cause,
In vain he strain'd his *p—ely* lungs;
Despair had padlock'd all their jaws,
And tied their ministerial tongues.

LXVI.

At length old *R—se* the silence broke,
Which art or witchcraft seem'd to bind;
And thus the vet'ran Pittite spoke,
The first emotions of his mind:—

LXVII.

"Oh! *R—l G—e*, forgive these tears,
We're out, Sir—out—yes, out of place;
Men who have serv'd their king for years,
Declar'd unfit, Oh! dire disgrace!

LXVIII.

"The Whigs, dread Sir, have got the day,
They fell upon us tooth and nail;
Drove out the intrepid *C——r—gh*,
And all the party at his tail.

LXIX.

" Yes, Sir, we have been much abus'd—
And *V—y G—s* is sadly beat;
Knock'd down and kick'd about and bruis'd,
And trod upon by dirty feet.

LXX.

" Now please your *H—n—ss*, take the seals,
And let us instantly away;
The gang are close upon our heels,
And will be here 'ere break of day."

LXXI.

" I see," the *R—t* cried, " 'tis true,
And feel much hurt at your distress;
Yes, *R—se*, upon my soul I do,
More than my tongue can well express.

LXXII.

" Come *L—p—l*, cheer up and speak,
Give not your bosom to despair,
Dispel the gloom from off your cheek,
And let us now your counsel share."

LXXIII.

" Oh! mighty *P—ce*," the *P—m—r* cried,
" All hopes of keeping in are pass'd;
This night our mutual strength has tried,
The Whigs have conquer'd us at last.

LXXIV.

" Out we must come and leave behind,
The comforts which our places gave;
I feel it harrow up my mind,
And fear 'twill bring me to my grave.

LXXV.

" For better servants cannot be,
Tho' much detested by our foes—
Than *M—l—e*, *C—r—h* and me,
L—d E—d—n, and old treasurer *R—se*.

LXXVI.

" Nor can a wiser *P—e* be found,
Then him whose services we quit;
In arms as well as arts renown'd,
For noble enterprises fit.

LXXVII.

" Think, Sir, what anguish we endure,
Forc'd from so kind a friend's employ,
This breast can never more ensure
A single hour of solid joy.

LXXVIII.

" Renowned *P—e*, a last adieu,
I see you feel your servant's grief;
But now alas, not even you
Have power to offer them relief."

LXXIX.

The *R—t* wav'd his snowy hand,
Unable to pronounce a word;
Mute was the pride of B—t—n's land,
The warlike son of *G——e* the Third.

LXXX.

M-c M—n, by his master's side,
Beheld the trouble of his breast;
" Retire, oh! noble friends," he cried,
" And seek to-night refreshing rest;

LXXXI.

" To-morrow let us see you here,
Some grand manœuvre must be play'd;
Be more compos'd, relinquish fear,
I promise mine and *Har—f—*'s aid.

LXXXII.

" We owe the prating Whigs a spite,
And fain would keep 'em out of place;
Be comforted, once more, good night;
Forget your present hapless case."

LXXXIII.

The *P—m—r* turn'd with aching heart,
His colleagues follow'd close behind,
But nothing cou'd a charm impart
To sooth the anguish of his mind;

LXXXIV.

Freed from the trappings of the state,
Each drooping member hung his head,
The porter clos'd the palace gate,
And all the party went to bed.

LXXXV.

Thus fell the Pittites in an hour,
By Whigs proclaim'd their country's foes,
Who held for years the reins of power,
And badly manag'd 'em, God knows.

LXXXVI.

Ah! what is power, how empty, vain,
" Not so," I hear a placeman say,
" For power procures us solid gain
In shape of patronage and pay."

LXXXVII.

Too true it is, our statemen's eyes
Are all directed to the pelf,
And man's important object lies
In striving to enrich himself.

LXXXVIII.

The country's welfare is forgot,
In mutual struggles after place,
And England's name receives the blot,
Her character, the foul disgrace.

LXXXIX.

Aurora peep'd upon the bed
Where *L—p—l* despairing lay,
Like one to all appearance dead,
To shame and keen remorse a prey.

XC.

M'M—n call'd, and saw his friend,
Consum'd by unavailing care;
Like the sick miser near his end,
Gives way to feelings of despair.

XCI.

" Cheer up, my L—d!" the *C——l* cries,
" I bring you tidings of delight;
Be more yourself,—awake—arise,
And ev'ry thing will yet be right.

XCII.

" The hungry talents now are met,
With *G—y*, the leader, at their head;
Whilst you inactive pine and fret,
And waste your precious time in bed;

XCIII.

" The Whigs exult at your disgrace,
And make no doubt but *G—c* intends
To bring their party into place,
And once more own his early friends.

XCIV.

" But lord, they're grown a monstrous fright,
So lean, and ugly, *old*, and *grey*,
Our master can't endure their sight,
And much I wish he never may.

XCV.

" Now therefore 'tis propos'd at Court,
To wind and baffle them about,
Indulge their eyes with sight of port,
But still contrive to keep 'em out.

XCVI.

" This must be carried on with art,
To save the appearance of design,
You've only to observe your part,
And I engage to manage mine."

XCVII.

His L—d—p started out of bed
And hug'd the C——*l* to his breast,
" Your words," he cried, " have rais'd the dead,
And made a *wretched* statesman blest.

XCVIII.

" Friend! thou art worthy of the name;
When I forget thy matchless love,
May infamy, disease, and shame,
Be pour'd upon me from above;

XCIX.

" But never shall this faithful heart,
Be guilty of the least deceit;
Or act a base ungrateful part,
Whilst life continues it to beat.

C.

" Now pri'thee, *C——l*, let us go,
And call on *R—se* and *C——h*;
I long to let our party know
The wonders you have wrought to-day."

CI.

As when the tempest swells the deep,
And lightnings dart, and thunders roar;
The ship flies up the watery steep—
And plunges on the rocky shore.

CII.

Despair and horror seize the crew,
Death seems to hover o'er their heads;
A watery grave appears in view,
And blacker still the tempest spreads.

CIII.

When, lo! a miracle! the blast
And foaming billows die away;
The clouds disperse, the storm is past.
The sun pours forth its cheering ray.

CIV.

Hope brightens in the pilot's eyes,
And fills his bosom with delight;
He views with joy the alter'd skies,
And scarely can believe his sight.

CV.

So *L—p—l* the transport felt,
And gratitude his bosom warms;
Joy enters in where misery dwelt,
As calms succeed tempestuous storms.

CVI.

But now the resurrection pair,
Call'd on the Pettites one by one;
Freed the whole *pack* from deep despair,
And rais'd up every mother's son.

FINIS.

G. Hazard, Printer, 49, Beech-Street, London

NEW SERIES. No. 4.

THE SATIRIST,

OR

MONTHLY METEOR.

NOVEMBER 1st, 1812.

EXPLANATION OF THE CARICATURE.

It was a melancholy sight to see the poor gentleman, Mr. Parliament, upon his death-bed. His decease was somewhat premature and unexpected, for, notwithstanding the various diseases with which he was assailed, there was an incorruptible stamina in his constitution which would have borne him through to an extreme old age, had he not been struck to the heart by a dagger, upon the blade and dudgeon of which the words "By Proclamation" were distinctly impressed. This was a mortal blow, under which the victim staggered and fell, after having resisted most vigorously, for a number of years, the complicated attacks of the *Scrofula* or *King's Evil*, the *Phthisis Pulmonalis*, or *Consumption* of the *Lungs*, the Opposition *Jaundice*, the *Dy-*(or rather *Dis-*)*sentery*, Delirious Intervals, Malignant Fever, and

a number of inferior disorders in various *members*. The first-mentioned complaint he happily surmounted by attention to his *diet* and regimen; the second was relieved in the usual manner by *resolution*, though not before the patient was half *Suffolkated**; the third is impossible to cure; and it is feared that it will prove to be a family disorder and annoy his successor, though certainly not with so much power, as *Spanish flies* have been found useful in softening the severity of the *complaint*. The three last-named diseases are also known to be hereditary: but it is hoped they will not prove very dangerous, as the *Lassitude* only affects one House; the *delirium* is confined to harmless raving, without any kind of exertions, and the *malignant fever* experience has taught the faculty may be reduced by proper treatment and quiet confinement to an apartment, with wholesome air, any where upon the banks of the river, but particularly about the *Tower*.

When it became evident that the poor Gentleman could not survive, a very extraordinary degree of bustle and activity ensued among his servants. Their first care was to bring a clergyman to pray by him; but here a difficulty arose, as some fellows, both in and out of livery, insisted, that though he had been born and bred a Protestant, yet that, besides being much directed by a certain Abbot, he had latterly shown a partiality towards the Catholic faith, and therefore it behoved them to procure a priest of that persuasion to confess him, and *grease his boots* for the long journey he was about to undertake. Others refused to accede to this proposal,

* Sir C. Bunbury, one of the respected Members for the county of Suffolk, [illegible] retirement, being no longer able to support the fatigue of hearing long speeches

contending, that though there was one *Abbot* in his House, yet he also entertained a Protestant *Clerk* and two *Chaplins*; and while they were squabbling about the point, the worthy Gentleman departed this life without *benefit of Clergy*; indeed he had always a great aversion to the cloth, and would never suffer any of the inferior orders in the hierarchy to share *Commons* with him.

Before Mr. Parliament, however, bade the world good night, he took an opportunity of delivering a few words to his attendants. He was stretched on a couch, on the canopy of which was embroidered the words "Bed of Justice," from this circumstance believed by antiquarians to be the very piece of furniture which belonged to Tristram Shandy's father, Mr. Shandy, where he was wont to hold debates upon all the nice points of internal and external economy. His head reclined in the lap of a little personage, but a great Speaker, who *ordered* every matter to be conducted in a proper manner; and of whom, though his name is clerical, we never heard that he performed any clerical function or religious ceremony, save only now and then *returning thanks*, which duty he invariably performed with a *grace* peculiar to himself, always giving *general* satisfaction. The Secretaries of the Establishment were in attendance on him who had now come to the very *Lees* of life, and must inevitably *Die-soon*; nothing could be more punningly appropriate than that all three clerks—namely, the two *Leys* and one *Dyson*, should be present. He lay quietly on his back, with his left side to the light. His ministers, who are always on the *right side*, were consequently out of sight—those on the other side could not make out what they were doing. At this they were much chagrined, as might be expected from their *enlightened* situation; and they loudly accused the said ministers of being in the *dark*. To all

which abuse the brief reply given, was, that they were troublesome fellows, who only wanted to get *behind the curtain*, or disport themselves upon a *bed of roses*; in which, however, they should find themselves *disappointed*. This dispute was barely over when the poor Gentleman, having swallowed a cordial medicine called Essence of *Salamanca*, and had some *Eagles'* feathers burnt under his nose to revive him, thus addressed the surrounding *parties*:

"As my final hour approaches, and the moment will soon arrive when I can be no longer useful to you, it is my earnest desire, that as my life has been laborious and active, so even my death may not be unattended with results beneficial to you and to my country. I have lived, as you know, in a troubled and stormy era, and my having played no minor part in the stupendous and eventful scenes which have been acted, may entitle my dying requests and observations to more than common regard. History will record that, *abroad*, I have sustained, as far as in me lay, the cause of civilized Europe, of freedom and independence, and have resisted to the utmost of my power the inroads of lawless ambition; the encroachments of usurped and usurping power; the extension of despotism, and the sweep of tyranny, aiming at universal dominion. At *home* I have performed the melancholy duty of providing for the declining years of a beloved monarch, at the same time maintaining his rights against invasion, and protecting the liberties of the people from diminution. Alas! the man through whose fidelity, courage, persevering intrepidity and firmness, immaculate honour and spotless integrity—the man whose talents and worth laid the foundation and raised the superstructure, whose genius planned, and whose uprightness of mind enabled him to execute these works—that man, "loved, lost, lamented," has perished within my sanc-

tuary, and assassination has tainted my age with the foul stain of innocent blood. Since that fatal day, if I have displayed irresolution, wavering of mind, and distraction, an indulgent posterity will impute it to a shock not easily to be overcome by even the firmest soul, or forgotten by the most insensible."

[Here the Speaker was overpowered by a flood of tears, and genuine sorrow for once vanquished the demon of faction in every heart. The impression was awful, the lesson teeming with superhuman intelligence, Fate itself seemed to urge counsels of irresistible energy into every breast—but oh, instability of mortal affairs! in a few short weeks all the vivid impression was effaced, and the example which seemed as if its effects would have been eternal dissolving "into thin, thin air,"

> Like the baseless fabric of a vision,
> Left not a wreck behind.]

"I will cease to dwell on these painful and sorrowful objects, and as cheerfully as I am able hasten to state the points of interest, which I conceive my experience entitles me to press upon your attention. I see before me (gazing at the top of the bed) the visions of my two immediate predecessors, and they beckon me to follow them. Yes, Spirits of departed Parliaments, I come! But a little space to offer my latest advice, and I will be with you!"

[Here the poor Gentleman fixed his eyes on *no vacancy, (see the Caricature)* and seemed much affected; but became somewhat re-assured on Mr. Sheridan's addressing to him some words of comfort, and telling him that for his part he was afraid of *no sort of Spirits* except such as lurked at the bottom of the "vasty deep"—he could not say he liked *Spirits in water.* On this, becoming more composed, the patient thus spoke:]

"My Sire was a *Man of Talents*, and, like most great *geniuses*, short lived. It was his misfortune to suppose that the extremes of pleasure and business were compatible. He was fond of company, of balls, and every species of fantastic amusements, and vainly imagined that his concerns would prosper while he devoted himself to sensual enjoyments. He soon discovered his error—his affairs went wrong, and, at length rendered furious by grief and disappointment, he dashed out his "desperate brains," of which, notwithstanding his *boasted* acuteness, he had no great store, against a wall which he seemed to have built up solely for the purpose of the commission of this suicide. I succeeded in the regular course of inheritance, and, after my eventful life, am in my turn to be succeeded by a legitimate heir. During my existence, several dangerous attempts have been made to curtail that heir of his fair proportions—under the cloak of reform, to shorten the period not only of his life but of the lives of all his successors. Designing men have endeavoured to render our family ephemeral, and to infect us with base humours, whose effect would hold such deadly enmity with our sound and vigorous natural system, that it must render us—

Most lazar-like—a vile and loathsome crust,

and in the end utterly destroy our generation. I have also been sorely troubled with a refractory and perverse disposition in certain quarters; but, thank Heaven, have happily surmounted all these difficulties.

"Now, my friends, I earnestly recommend to you the care of my infant progeny, who like a Phœnix rises from the funeral bed of his parent. Remember the fable of the *bundle of sticks*, and never forget that his good, your own welfare, the weal of the country, and the cause of the world, depend upon your giving a long pull, and a strong pull, and a pull all together."

Endeavouring to impart a proper emphasis to this advice, the worthy gentleman exerted himself beyond his strength—and expired without a groan.

About this period the young Squireling made his first appearance, as may be seen by inspecting the picture representing the memorable event, and displayed in the front of the *Satirist*. He appears a lusty lad with a great family-resemblance to his progenitor, and comes into the world with as much noise as his infant faculties permit. A fine *canvass* cradle was prepared for him, and an immense number of new Candidates presented themselves with addresses to be taken into his service. Most of them, however, were rejected, and especially a set of busy, meddling, hot-headed, low fellows, who pretended to popularity, and who were ousted to a man—though they called their own *nonsense* the *sense* of the country. One of the most forward of these gentry, who is a linen-draper in the city, is visible clambering up the bed-clothes, but the *counter-pane* gives way with him, and he falls into the abyss that yawns below. Addressing him is a *Centaur, not fabulous*, who fain would, but dare not, attempt to climb. One would take the animal for a *Horse*; but he is called a *Mare* in the city, where he displays much of the *breeding* of a *Hunter*. Among the most forward to receive the squalling bantling is the Member for *Bedford*, who naturally takes his station near the *bed*, and endeavours to coax the young Squire with a fine frothy pot of porter. He promises, if he will be quiet, to make him an Emperor or a King—at Drury Lane; but the boy seems to dislike the sight of him; and as for the porter, he abhors it *entirely*. Another of the conspicuous figures near the child is the renowned Piccadilly Baronet, who, having stolen into the *room* by the Westminster door, did not on this occasion *stand for Oxford*. Always fond

of intermeddling in *little dirty pieces of business*, he comes with a *clout*, to apply as an *a posteriori* argument, and insists upon it, that whatever others may think of these matters, he considers them to rank high among the *necessary* reformations to be made, without which Parliament must go to pot!—The leader of the opposition produces an under garment of *real Irish*, and a multitude of his followers are engaged in various occupations concomitant upon an occasion like the present. Some are drying little caps, others warming night-gowns, and in fine every one saying or doing something to prove himself useful and worthy of employment.

Over the fire-place is represented a birth from the *heathen* Mythology, emblematic, no doubt, of the necessity of doing away with all *religious* distinctions, and granting (" oh generous churchwardens!") what is called universal toleration and freedom of conscience. There are a number of other little incidents scattered over the face of this lively representation. Among others there is a broken phial of *deleterious drugs*, a decoction of *Alder-Wood*, which the physicians threw away, as taking it must have created a *nausea* in the baby's stomach. Poor Wardle is invisible at this time; but, as every body must be anxious to know where the *great patriot* is——he is *under the bed*; and has offered to *sell milk* to, or even to nurse the child himself. Sir T. Turton, Gen. Tarleton, and a few other Worthies, are in the same place—out of sight; while persons of the names of Hunt, Cobbett, Hallett, &c. have already tumbled headlong into that gulph to which the aspiring Linen-Draper is fast descending. These patriotic souls are never easy but when they are keeping the nation in *hot water*. The Caricature, on the part of the nation, has *done* upon them POETICAL JUSTICE.

THE REJECTED BARDS—GENUS IRRITABILE.

"'Tis not in mortals to command success."

God prosper long the mimic king,
Whitbread of Drury Lane;
A sad Address-writing I sing
In meet and woeful strain.

"Addresses pen! ye poets all
(The sage Committee said),
And Twenty Guineas forthwith shall
Be for the *prettiest* paid."

To hunt the Muse, and gain the prize,
The Bardlings took their way;
And critics harsh damn and despise
The rhymings of that day.

Oh dear! it was a shock to see,
And likewise for to hear,
Good English mangled dreadfully,
And scatter'd here and there.

Between the Muse and politics,
Oh, how was Brinsley crost!
With Drury's and with Stafford's tricks
He both elections lost.

And (1) Colman too, that wight of glee,
Of whom 'tis told, I wot,
That, having drunk three bottles, he
Each night a poem wrote;

Till thus from Bacchus and the Nine
Had stream'd a copious *score*;
And had he had more time and wine,
He'd penn'd as many more.

On Rokeby's song, great (2) WALTER SCOTT,
Did'st thou so ceaseless dwell?
By Twenty Guineas tempted not,
Thou bad'st thy "harp farewell?"

Nor could a single strain yspare,
From ancient records wrung;
Yet looking fruitful, fresh, and fair,
Like melons rais'd from dung?

(3) TOM CAMPBELL, cloth'd in truth and trope,
His tribute offers there,
But finds the *Pleasures of his Hope*
End only in despair.

Him Tom the second followed sure,
Anacreon-like elate;
But B—dy (4) MOORE, and CAMPBELL pure,
Meet with an equal fate.

The stern Committee gives the word,
That quells his pride full soon:
(5) "Our playhouse nothing shall afford
Obscene—*but the Saloon.*"

Next (6) LEWIS came—alas! no spell,
No necromantic charm,
No horrid ghost—no dæmon fell,
The critics to disarm!

Among the other lumber thrown,
His tale of terror lay;
His spirit quell'd—his magic flown—
His devils gone astray.

His powers, in evil hour, (7) CRABBE tried,
And met a fate severe.
" We want, since Bedford's mine (SAM cried),
No BOROUGH-*mongers* here."

Then (8) MARTIN SHEE upon the stage
Thought he might play a part:.
But fail'd—for some were there more sage
In ELEMENTS of *Art!*

Next (9) CROKER's verse in fragments fell
Beneath the Judge's bann:
His Thespian strains no more could *tell*
Than speech to Mary-Ann.

And (10) HOOKE, no foe to farce and fun,
Nor hostile to a hoax,
Although in every line a pun,
Here fail'd with all his jokes.

And (11) TAYLOR, Monsieur Tonson's sire,
For numerous prologues fam'd,
At Drury found another fire,
In which his verses flam'd.

(12) The chirping Bardlings from the Lakes
Their contributions pour;
But (13) GAFFER SOUTHEY's shiv'ring shakes
Here find no *opening* door.

Poor (14) WORDSWORTH too, that simple bard,
With baby lispings fine,
(15) Like *Alice*, at his fate so hard
Has reason to repine.

And (16) COLERIDGE, namby-pamby's prince,
Sinks in the Muse's strife;
His verse just daring to evince
As much soul as his wife!

Then (17) Treas'ry WHARTON tried a flight,
But nothing might avail;
Dismal as Roncevalles' fight,
His best exertions fail.

(18) Sir JAMES BLAND BURGES, softest name.
Among the Muses' train,
Essays his skill, but sinks with shame,
Ne'er to revive again.

And (19) LAUREATE PYE, alas! alas!
It grieves me to relate,
E'en he, rejected with disgrace,
Laments a fallen state.

(20) PRATT's Gleanings no kind fate controls.
No Sympathy they find
In Combe or Holland's tender souls,
Or Whitbread's sterner mind.

And (21) GIFFORD vainly strikes the lyre;
His loyal numbers flow,
Where none the loyal verse admire,
Or care to deck his brow.

Infirm and aged (22) PINDAR tries
To raise the song once more;
But satire's point all broken lies
Detested on the floor.

(23) Now forward rush a dreadful throng
Of Things who try to sing,
But buz, like gnats, their tuneless song,
Without the gnat's sharp sting.

Sweet, senseless, simpering (24) Sir JOHN CARR
No more abroad need roam;
Nor stranger be in lands afar,
A stranger now at home.

Reeled (25) HORACE rhymes in vain,
He 'scapes the audience hiss;
No Kemble friends at Drury Lane
Draw out an *empty* Twiss.

(26) FITZGERALD's ravings lose their worth,
Of fury full and sound,
His *literary fund* brings forth
No fund of "Twenty Pound."

Like disappointments (27) KENNY freeze,
Left in the race behind;
He deem'd he with a farce might please,
But could not "Raise the Wind."

(28) CHARLES KEMBLE, full of German lore,
And French translated wit,
Though quite *original* his store,
Fail'd too the prize to hit.

(29) DIMOND's insipid verses run,
He thought the meed his own,
Because so aptly his "Red Sun
On smoking ruins shone."

And (30) ARNOLD, Dimond's counterpart,
With equal genius blest,
On Cumberland employ'd his art,
But yet the laurel miss'd.

Illustrious two—where could a third
Be found thy fame to match?
(31) DIBDIN, advance! prompter preferr'd,
And at the honour catch.

And last, not least in merit's sweep,
To reach the envied throne:
Strive, let not all thy *beauties sleep*,
Sweet-scented (32) SKEFFINGTON.

Ah me! in vain their sculls they (33) *mill*,
With brains so fully cramm'd;
Damn the Committee those, whom still
The public taste has damn'd.

(34) For Busby's son I needs must wail,
God rest his Muse in peace!
Who, jumping on the stage to rail,
Was nabb'd by the police!

These all dispos'd of, sing my Muse,
Oh sing the dreadful jar!
When Lord meets Lord, then, then ensues—
Then comes the tug of war!

His wond'rous powers but barely tried
In chanting Portugal:
Advance (35) Childe Harold, (36) Grenville cried,
With thee I'll try a *fall*;

Let you and me to rhyme agree,
And set these bards aside.
Accurs'd, Childe Harold said, be he
By whom this is denied.

They rhym'd, and England's tongue abus'd
With pens of feathery spire,
Until the ink which they had us'd
Of paper spoilt a quire.

With that there came an arrow keen,
Shot from a curs'd Review!
That struck Lord George with horrid spleen,
And pierc'd him through and through.

Against the *talents* of this Lord
So right the shaft was set,
The grey-goose quill that wrote the word
Was with his sad tears wet.

Then stooping, Harold took, with scorn,
The murder'd poet's hand,
(37) 'Twas well, said he, to wealth thou 'wert born,
Else thou had'st ne'er had land.

Then Holland, Harold having ta'en
Around the neck, did say,
Ne'er be forgot, at Drury Lane,
The rhyming of this day.

The crown, the glorious crown, be thine,
And Twenty Guineas too;
Homage and profit, bard divine,
Belong alike to you.

God save the King, and bless our time
With poetry and peace;
And grant henceforth that fits of rhyme
'Mong noblemen may cease.

NOTES, BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL.

1. Colman.—It is reported that this prolific genius wrote twenty Addresses, at the rate of one per night, when inspired with a "skinful of wine." They were all rejected.

2. Walter Scott is at present employed on a new Poem, entitled Rokeby.

3. Thomas Campbell, author of the Pleasures of Hope.

4. Anacreon Moore.—In some instances he has suffered his fancy to mislead his judgment; the consequence is, that much of his poetry is of a tendency too dangerous to be tolerated in virtuous society.

5. Alluding to the Saloon in the New Theatre, which is fitted up with all that a lascivious imagination could desire, in order to promote the intents of the place. Ottomans, &c. &c.! seem to cry out with Lear—

"To't, luxury, pell mell."

6. Monk Lewis, well-known for his horrible imaginings

7. Crabbe, the author of the *Borough*, and other admired poems.

8. Shee, author of the Elements of Art, and an artist of excellent ability.

9. Croker, the poetical secretary to the admiralty. His earliest work

was a poem on the Dublin Theatricals. The fracas with Mrs. Clarke is in the recollection of all the world.

10. Theodore Hooke, the writer of Tekeli, and other successful Dramatic Trifles. He was grievously suspected of the Berners Street Hoax.

11. Taylor, well-known as the author of the humorous tale of Monsieur Tonson, and of innumerable prologues and epilogues

12. "Chirping Bardlings" of the Lakes of Cumberland, where a colony of these Della Cruscan Triflers warble their native melodies. Aiming at simplicity, they become childish; at sublimity, unnatural; at nature, silly; at beauty, affected; and at novelty, absurd. Among these the most celebrated are,

13. Southey, to whose Gaffer Gray shivering and shaking an allusion is made;

14. Wordsworth, another, "like the first," who is compared to,

15. Alice Fell, the heroine of one of his pathetic fooleries; and,

16. Coleridge, "a third, and like the former." He has parted, we are told, from his wife, because, as he says, she has no soul!!!

17. The poetic fury has attacked even the Treasury, the Secretary of which has written a poem, entitled Rondeaulles. One would think these people who touch the cash, might leave the idle trade to poorer men.

18. Burges, author of the Exodiad, and other stupid works.

19. The Poet Laureat, celebrated for dull odes, and wise annotations upon Shakspeare.

20. Pratt, whose Gleanings, and poem entitled Sympathy, are generally known.

21. Gifford, the able vindicator of sterling legitimate poetry; and the champion, who, by his writings, vanquished a false and vicious taste, which threatened the destruction of all that was excellent in the British School.

22. Dr Wolcot, now reduced to a state of second childhood. Some catch-penny pretenders continue to usurp his name, and disgrace the Muse.

23. The tribe of Poetasters, who now infest the ditches about the bottom of Parnassus. Several of them are specifically named in the following verses. Unluckily for the public, a junta of these would be geniuses have obtained the direction of our Dramatic Entertainments, whence they exclude every work of merit, and suffer nothing to be produced but their own execrable trash

24. Sir John Carr, a great traveller, and a stranger to all the countries he has visited. He has also published a volume of Sonnets, &c a circumstance with which, we dare say, few of our readers were acquainted.

25. Horace Twiss, one of our Metropolitan Minor Bards, of whom it may have been heard that he wrote the Valedictory Address spoken by

Mrs. Siddons, to whom he is related. The story of the Twiss, alluded to in the last line of the verse, pertains to an ancestor of this poet, and is well known in Ireland.

26. Fitzgerald, who spouts one of his own effusions annually, at the Literary Fund dinner.

27. Kenny, a farce writer of some talent. Raising the Wind is one of his best productions.

28. C. Kemble, the performer, who has done his part towards debauching the stage, by translating vile trash from the French and German.

29 Dimond, a puling scribbler, whose fopperies are forced upon the town through certain interest he possesses with the threatrical managers. The Age of Reason is, however, dawning, and these nonsensical vagaries will speedily be put down. The words marked as copied are from the Foundling of the Forest. Lord Byron seems to have had them in his eye when he talks of the "Red shadow of a revolving column of flame."

30. Arnold, another Worthy among these *Drama*-makers; and, as viceroy to Whitbread, entrusted with the supreme management of the New Theatre, Drury Lane. His own pieces are d—d by the public, and he privately damns all rivals. His mangling of Cumberland has been noticed in preceding numbers of the SATIRIST.

31. Tom Dibdin, the Prompter of the same Theatre. Worthy a place in the triumvirate.

32. Skeffington, a remarkable fop, well known upon the town. He is of the *Massy* breed, like Dimond. He produced the Sleeping Beauty, and other works of great genius.

33 *Mill*, the fashionable phrase for beating.

34. Dr. Busby and his son, the translators of Lucretius. The young gentleman made his first appearance on any stage, on the 14th, at Drury Lane. The Committee wisely conceal their names, and are thus evidently saved from assassination by the hands of disappointed poets.

35. Childe Harold, the poetical name of Lord Byron, who has carried off the prize in this grand *Battle of the Bards*. It is currently reported, that he presented his Address to Lord Holland, regularly authenticated with his signature; and Lord Holland having transmitted it to the Committee, it was adopted at once, and all those sent in pursuant to the advertisement thrown aside.

FIAT JUSTITIA:—FIE AT JUSTICE!

36. Lord George Grenville, a Bard of no *ignoble name*. His Lordship has composed a Poem called Portugal, or at least put his name to it; and, to say the truth, it is just such a poem as such a Lord might write. 'Tis well for him, as his victorious adversary asserts, (37) that he had not his fortune to make by his wits

THE TEMPLE OF SUICIDE!!!

> The veriest wretch who soonest dies
> Is soonest with the blest!

To be sure he is, Mr. Satirist; and I am astonished that, in a work such as you profess your Monthly Meteor to be, you should not long ago have dipped your pen into the black liquid of authors which resembles the waters of Styx (*Styx atra—vide* Virgil's Georgics), to vindicate our national character, and the numerous individuals who have of late *died like Britons* in support of it, from the obloquy with which the enemies of our dearest rights endeavour to overwhelm us on this interesting subject. In the introduction of your predecessors, and I think I see enough in the conduct of your NEW SERIES to induce a belief that you will not deviate from so excellent a principle, it is said, "our partialities are entirely and truly British; and so far from blushing at their existence, or apologizing for their influence, we honestly confess, that they are those of which we do not wish to *outlive* the extinction." This was spoken like men, and like Englishmen; but I am grieved to observe, that either from the change of editors, or from this *prospectus* being, like others, couched in language to inveigle readers at the outset, making fair promises, like candidates for parliamentary honours, and forgetting them with equal speed and facility, or from other unknown causes, the fruit is not in abundance, what the blossom was in promise. Had the Satirist not deserted his pledge, had he not sacrificed his "British partialities," he never could have borne to stand idly by and see our dearest prejudices and most

sacred privileges assaulted and mangled, as they have lately been on the indefeasible and glorious right we enjoy to commit SUICIDE! For shame, Sir! rouse from this apathy, shake off the lethargy that has benumbed your faculties, stand boldly forward in your country's cause, maintain your own consistency, and, if need be, illustrate by your example* what you may fail in defending by your writings. In the mean time, till you can buckle on your armour, or tie on your final cravat, accept the following humble but well-meant Essay, in support of the free and independent principle for which some of our fathers have bled, "*that every Englishman has a right to slay himself,* when, where, and how *he pleases!*"

Some of the detestable casuists who have attempted to rob, or argue us out of this inestimable national prerogative, tell us, in one sentence, that it is most cowardly to fly from the ills of life by skulking to our graves; and in the next they paint, in glowing colours, the "horrible daring" that would tempt us to rush unprepared into the presence of a Creator incensed by the destruction of his own handiwork. Now it is impossible that this proposition can hang together. Can there be in logic a more stupid and palpable contradiction than that which asserts the man to be a coward who boldly conceives, firmly undertakes, and resolutely executes the most intrepid of all human actions, fearlessly offends an almighty Divinity, and, as it were, leaps the broad barrier of mortality to meet him face to face in combat, like the apostate angel of yore? If this bravery does not entitle a man to another epithet than that of coward, I must confess I am utterly at

* We thank our Correspondent for this advice, but humbly hope we may be able to do more service with the quill than the pistol—with ink than with hemlock!—*Set.*

a loss to imagine what feat of gallantry will procure for him the title of courageous. These, in my judgment, are not of that despicable description of creatures whom the apprehension of death, or the terrors of hell alone, restrain from crime. They despise death, and with the Scottish bard exclaim—

> The fear of hell's a hangman's whip
> To hold the *wretch* in order.

If virtuous at all, they have the merit of not being virtuous through dread, but virtuous for virtue's own sweet sake.

Having thus demonstrated, that the being who commits Suicide must be brave and good, I proceed to show that he must be wise also. And here I cannot help noticing the arrogance of the censors above alluded to, in assuming, as a basis of argument in all these cases, that the spirited self-slaughterer is unfit and unprepared to die. It is really the height of presumption in any one to suppose that they know better than a person himself does, when he is fit and prepared to die. It were as consistent to pretend to superior intelligence as to the state of his appetites, to contradict him when he avers that he is hungry or thirsty, and contend that he must be mistaken. Granting then that a man is the best judge of his own actions, which is a maxim in every body's mouth, it follows that he cannot do a wiser act than depart from this life whenever he feels himself ready for the journey—*in utrumque paratus.* Circumstances may arise to render him less fit, and then, instead of his *taking death*, death may take him,

> Unhousel'd, unanointed, unaneal'd,
> With all his imperfections on his head:

for though we have it in our power to die when we think

it convenient, you will have the goodness to observe, that we have not the ability of postponing FATE, when he appears with his hour-glass run to the dregs, and his scythe newly whetted, even at a time when it may suit us very indifferently to attend to his summons!

Brave, wise, good, and I may add, patriotic (without entering into an argument on that point, for Suicide is acknowledged to be an English national merit) can we withhold our admiration from the man who "wilfully seeks his own salvation;" and, in the true spirit of independence, uses his own sound discretion in the most material event of his life—namely, his leaving it? Certainly not!—and so convinced am I of the expediency of exercising this discretion, and the transcendent glory to be derived from the commission of *felo de se*, that I would hang myself to-morrow for the satisfaction of enjoying it, could I *only* be assured that any means were afforded to departed spirits to hear and see what the world said of them behind their backs, or in the words of Ossian—

"To live on their former fame."

Nothing can be more unjust than to censure our countrymen and contemporaries for the very act which, in an ancient Greek or Roman, we should laud and magnify as a proof of the most heroic constancy, patriotism, and magnanimity. Why should we (the present Westminster election reminds me of the comparison), why should we deny the same meed to Paull which we assign to Cato? As the one would not outlive the Liberties of Rome, so neither would the other outlive the Liberties of Westminster!

But I may be told that the Christian religion renders that now a crime, which in less favoured and enlightened times might be accounted a virtue. I deny the conclusion,

Truth is immutable, and neither times nor seasons can change right into wrong! Besides, will it be asserted, that the Christian religion is calculated to render mankind weak, timid, and pusillanimous? No! It gives us a well-assured firmness and resolution. How then are we to understand the matter, when we hear those blessed with the *new light*, and fervent *in the spirit*, expressing, in ardent and at the same time in wailing unavailing language, how much their "*souls long for immortality!*" These are dastardly and no true Christians, else we might address them in the words of Lady Macbeth—

> ———Art thou afeard
> To be the same in thine own act and valour,
> As thou art in desire * * * *
> * * * * * * *
> And live a coward in thine own esteem;
> Letting *I dare not*, wait upon *I would*,
> Like the poor CAT i' the adage!

I contend that such is not the effect of the pure spirit of the Christian faith, Roman or Protestant, but that, on the contrary, it promotes, encourages, and patronizes Suicide!

Before the immortality of the soul, and its eternal future existence in bliss or misery, was clearly revealed, mankind, groping in the dark, and wading in the mist of conjecture on this important subject, had to venture on a vast unknown and apparently dismal bourne—

> Non secus ac si quâ penitùs vi terra dehiscens
> Infernas reseret sedes, et regna recludat
> Pallida, Diis invisa; supérq; immane barathrum
> Cernatur, trepidéntque immisso lumine Manes:

from which bourne no traveller e'er returned, with a fine quarto volume of the "STRANGER IN THE OTHER

World," full of anecdotes, and replete with marvellous merrie conceits and pretty stories. But since the promulgation of the doctrines of Christianity, we know that our state in this life is merely probationary, and that all our hopes and affections are, or at least ought to be, fixed on another world; settled on things above. Here then is the grand distinction between Pagan and Christian. The former was acquainted with nothing better than the delights of his present state; the latter views his present state as one of disappointment, trial, and difficulty. The former was bound in by all the social ties, the duties he owed to his dependants, his friends, his family, his country; but the latter owes a duty to himself paramount to all these, for what are kindred, family, friends, or country, to the safety of his own immortal soul? Has not the good Christian then a great inducement to die, of which the Heathen could have no conception? When tired of his trial he is right to call for a verdict. When prepared to shuffle off this mortal coil, no worldly ties ought to have any weight with him, but on the contrary he ought instantly to have weight with the tie of that cord which gives him to superior and lasting enjoyments.

It may indeed be said, that many of the precepts of the Christian religion are directly hostile to my assertions. All I can answer to this is, and I trust the answer will be thought satisfactory, that I *am not acquainted with them*, and the only time I ever heard such doctrine delivered from the pulpit was by an itinerant preacher in Scotland, who, before administering the most holy of the Sacraments, desired that "no drunkards, adulterers, false-swearers, nor *any who had committed Suicide*, should dare to approach the table of the Lord!"—I must acknowledge too, that so universal was the conviction among his auditors, that the latter description of crimi-

nals were unworthy of the occasion; though many of the other classes overstepped the injunction, not one of those in whose behalf I now wield my pen presumed to appear!

The only remaining solid objection that I can anticipate against the persons in whose defence this Essay is written, is, that they commit the act of Suicide from some distaste of life, or in disgust at some trifling misfortune that may have befallen them, and during a species of temporary lunacy which disappointment creates, and not after due reflection, and balancing maturely both sides of the account. To this I answer, in the first place, "de gustibus non est disputandum," and therefore the matter admits of no argument. Secondly, a disgust at life can only be generated by a consciousness of guilt; and the man who puts a period to his existence under this feeling, is merely executing that justice on himself which the laws of society would inflict were society as well acquainted with his crimes as he is himself. Is it not then more magnanimous to perform justice even on oneself, than wait the chance of discovery and the tardy inflictions of the law?

Thus it appears, upon the whole, that they are in general the most brave, wise, patriotic, good, and religious persons who are induced to take a quick step into a better world; and if, as there is no rule without exception, they should happen to be bad, foolish, or intemperate men, who adopt this splendid resolution, that then they are simply, by an act of justice at the termination of their lives, making some atonement for their vices during their continuance. They are consequently *all* worthy of praise, celebrity, and honour.

That such may be their high reward, I take the liberty of submitting to the public, through the medium of a work

of national utility, a few general hints on the proper mode of evincing the grateful sentiments of Great Britain towards those who have shed their own blood, shot, hanged, poisoned, stabbed, or drowned themselves, for the purpose of preserving entire and irreproachable their country's character for "nobly daring"—of maintaining our dearest charter; and proving to all the world, that a free-born Briton is as free to die in support of any of his immunities!

If these hints are approved of, I may submit details hereafter, should I feel inclined to survive this present November—the grand outline is as follows—for a

TEMPLE OF SUICIDE.

So soon as a Suicide is committed, the body of the patriot shall become public property.

The Coroner, or some higher *de-Functionary* nominated to that office, shall immediately take the corpse, and expose it for *three* days in a public place, also to be appointed, in order to inspire the survivors with the glorious principle of emulation, which will doubtless fill their breasts when they contemplate the awfully impressive distorted limbs and agonized features of the deceased hero, whether he died by lead, steel, water, or hemp, of which latter article I rejoice to see, by the newspapers, that "a sufficient quantity has been received from *Saint* Petersburg, for '*three years' consumption*'."

But as the fame thus obtained would only be transitory, whereas it ought to be everlasting—*ere perrennius* —it would be requisite to erect a MIGHTY TEMPLE somewhere about the metropolis (say *Constitution Hill*), where plaster, stucco, marble, and other full-length representations of the illustrious dead might be preserved, for the purpose of exciting the emulation of posterity.

These statues should be modelled from the person as above exposed, and portray death to the life; to the pedestal of each should be affixed a scroll, stating the name, family, circumstances, apparent cause of self-destruction, and other particulars relative to the distinguished individual. In the upper compartments of the fane the painter might exercise his art, and on the glowing ceiling the spectator might behold the most lively images of dying in all its various forms and branches. The statuary and painter would in these works have a fair field offered for objects *exquisitely finished* and most *capitally executed*; and their glory would be immortal, though their subjects were *no more!* I would recommend that the sacred building be surrounded by a grove of oak, emblematic of its being a truly English Institution. The landscape would be rendered interesting by the numerous figures with which it must soon be adorned. Many Englishmen would naturally *attach* themselves to their country's oaks, and we should see the most worthy and patriotic members of society, as on all great emergencies, faithfully *hanging together.* The cordage employed on such occasions would give the wood a marine or naval appearance; and this might be increased by taking in the canal, into which other devoted patriots, male and female, would conscientiously dive for the preservation of the honour of their native land, which is certainly best accomplished by water.

In these *deep* solitudes and awful repositories of departed patriotism, the youthful hearts of the rising generation would be inspired with that contempt for death, and that thirst for glory, which renders man the most noble of created beings. As they contemplated the gashes and gaps through which life had been let out, they would feel their bosoms glow with supernatural ardour;

and, whether it were to die or to dine, they would retire from the influential atmosphere of the Temple which they loved, with equal composure, firmness, and magnanimity. Oh blessed days, when it might be fashionable for a gentleman to quit a company with "Good bye; I am going to the Temple to hang myself:" or a lady to take an affectionate leave of her disconsolate but exulting husband with, "Adieu, my love; I am going to heaven by the canal!"

Bards too! would rise to sing this glorious theme. Thus independant of the national benefits to be reaped from the preservation of these brilliant examples, the TEMPLE OF SUICIDES would be the nurse of the arts. Divine poesy, painting, and sculpture, would here have the most admirable scope for exertion, and with this advantage too, that, whenever an author or artist failed in one way, he might render himself immortal in another. If his pen, or pencil, or chissel failed, his penkife, or pistol, or halter, might with superior glory be employed.

To crown the whole, three Laureats might be appointed from the *worst* poets of the age (because the perusal of their writings is enough to cause a man to hang himself), whose sole occupation and duty it should be to immortalize, in appropriate strains, the honoured Beings who obtained niches in the Temple. These, bound up in foolscap and preserved, would supply the place of Archives, and, if publicly recited upon stated occasions, would have an excellent and constitutional effect. Another great advantage would be, that such readings might supersede the use of religious worship, not only in London, but throughout the country, where there would certainly be speedily erected universal provincial chapels on the plan of my Metropolitan Temple.

Such, Sir, are the outlines of a plan which will do

honour to all who patronize and promote it. So fraught with benefits, so teeming with resplendent results, I sincerely hope, that, coming from an individual humble as I am, will not operate to obscure the grandeur of the idea; but that, being seen in a work like yours, devoted to real patriotism and to the best interests and prosperity of Great Britain, it may awaken the feeling of some yet undiscovered Hampden, who (not to sink into bathos) will open a vein—of subscription at Lloyd's, call a meeting at the Crown and Anchor, or in some other way commence the grand undertaking, which needs only to be begun to be crowned with success.

My hopes are encouraged by the fitness of the time—the rest I leave to the Fates, and am,

Sir,

Yours, till death,

GOLGOTHA.

Butcher's Row,
the first of gloomy November,
Anno 1812.

DRURY LANE—OPENING ADDRESS.

WE have abstracted the Address written by Lord Byron, and spoken by Mr. Elliston, on the opening of Drury Lane Theatre, from the portion of our work allotted to the Review of Theatrical affairs, because the circumstances which preceded and led to this poem, as well as the distinguished name of its author, appeared to recommend it to a more particular and select notice than it would have attained amid the mass of matter belonging

to the *mimic world*, which has this month flowed in upon us.

The Committee appointed to manage the *New* Theatre, having *ab initio* set out on the principle that every thing pertaining thereto ought to be conducted on a *new plan*, and determined that the *new* house should have *new* ways, *new* rules, *new* renters, and *new* systems, among other of their freaks resolved to obtain an Address to the Public by means entirely original and *New*. They accordingly advertised all those whom it might concern, that persons who had been bitten by the Muse might transmit their ravings to the Committee of Management, marked in a certain way, but most religiously concealing names, in order to avoid undue preference and partiality; and the said Committee would scan, compare, judge, and decide upon the most meritorious, which should consequently receive the honour of the laurel, and be recited on the night of Opening the Theatre. The judges of these competitory productions were, like those of Hell, three in number, and selected with all that respect to diversity which in combination is likely to conduce to a right result. The triumvirate was composed of one peer and two commoners—one poet and two prosers—one Lord and two Brewers; and the only points in which they coincided were in being all three parliament men, all three politicians, all three in opposition to the Government of their country. Their names, as we understand, were Vassal Holland, Samuel Whitbread, and Harvey Christian Combe. Like the presidents at the Olympic Games, they pledged themselves to act impartially, to take no bribes, and not to discover why they rejected or crowned the candidates; but we have not heard whether, like these Presidents, they sat naked, and interdicted the appearance of women under the

penalty of being thrown down from a rock. Perhaps the cold weather prevented their following the ancient example in the former case, and Lady H——d might object to their pursuing the precedent in the latter! But be that as it may, they soon found that they had opened a sluice and floodgate, through which an outrageous torrent of rhyme poured in upon them. Lord Holland exclaimed with the poet—

——"beyond a doubt
All Bedlam or Parnassus is broke out;"

and the brother brewers ordered a dray with a double allowance of horses to attend in Brydges Street, for the purpose of carrying off the rubbish.

How they formed their opinion, and on what grounds they decided, themselves only know. Whether, like Bobadil, "by some certain instinct" which they possessed, or whether by a course more obvious, it is unnecessary for us to guess; but sure we are, that the glorious distinction fell to the lot of *a parliamant man, a politician, and one in opposition to the Government of his country just like themselves!!!!!!* Who will now venture to affirm that there are no *sympathies* in our natures? Let him take his answer HERE, or, denying conviction, confess himself suspicious, and insinuate that the rank of the Lord, and the merits of the Politician, had as much influence on this occasion as the elevation, the dignity, and the superiority of the bard.

Having briefly narrated the history of this poetical competition, and noticed the singular coincidences that attend on the election of the PINDAR of the contest, we shall proceed to offer a few observations on the *prize poem* itself, which, though like his Grace of Bedford's *prize pigs, sheep,* or *oxen,* it may be great, fair, fat, and full of

juice and marrow, is yet, also, like his Grace's *prize* pigs, sheep, and oxen, burdened with a *quantum* of *offal.*

Of Lord Byron, as a man of talent and a poet of genius, our opinion is explicitly given in the Review of his Childe Harold, &c. in our last and present number; and we are free to acknowledge, that if called upon to pitch on a bard pre-eminently qualified to write such an Address as the present, his Lordship would have stood very near the first on our catalogue. But, in looking at this subject, we do not consider the poem of Lord Byron, but the poem which, in a *private public* competition, to which all the genius of Britain was invited, has been declared the BEST by the umpires on the trial. It is the essence of British poetry that we criticise; which, if the judges have not been led astray by the example of *Midas* at the other house, is an essence which we will venture at once to pronounce to be so entirely *pyrcumatic* as to savour nothing of the *Midnight Oil.* It consists of the seventy-three lines which follow—

"IN one dread night, our city saw—and sigh'd—
Bow'd to the dust, the Drama's tow'r of pride;
In one short hour beheld the blazing fane,
Apollo sink, and Shakspeare cease to reign.
Ye, who beheld, oh sight admir'd and mourn'd!
Whose radiance mock'd the ruin it adorn'd!
Through clouds of fire, the massy fragments riven,
Like Israel's pillar, chase the night from heaven,
Saw the long column of revolving flames
Shake its red shadow o'er the startled Thames,
While thousands, throng'd around the burning dome,
Shrank back appall'd, and trembled for their home;
As glar'd the volum'd blaze, and ghastly shone
The skies, with lightnings awful as their own;
Till black'ning ashes and the lonely wall
Usurp'd the Muse's realm, and mark'd her fall;
Say—shall this new nor less aspiring pile,
Rear'd, where once rose the mightiest in our isle,

Know the same favor which the former knew,
A shrine for Shakspeare—worthy him and *you*!
Yes—it shall be—The magic of that name
Defies the scythe of time, the torch of flame,
On the same spot still consecrates the scene,
And bids the Drama *be* where she hath *been*.—
This fabric's birth attests the potent spell—
Indulge our honest pride, and say, *How well!*
As soars this fane to emulate the last,
Oh! might we draw our omens from the past,
Some hour, propitious to our pray'rs, may boast
Names such as hallow still the dome we lost.
On Drury first your Siddons' thrilling art
O'erwhelm'd the gentlest, storm'd the sternest heart:
On Drury, Garrick's latest laurels grew.
Here your last tears retiring Roscius drew,
Sigh'd his last thanks, and wept his last adieu.
But still for living wit the wreaths may bloom
That only *waste* their odors o'er the tomb.
Such Drury claim'd and claims—nor you refuse
One tribute to revive his slumb'ring muse.
With garlands deck your own Menander's head!
Nor hoard your honors idly for the dead!
Dear are the days which made our annals bright,
Ere Garrick fled or Brinsley ceas'd to write,
Heirs to their labors, like all high born heirs,
Vain of *our* ancestry as they of theirs.
While thus Remembrance borrows Banquo's glass,
To claim the sceptred shadows as they pass,
And we the mirror hold, where imag'd shine
Immortal names, emblazon'd on our line,
Pause—ere their feebler offspring you condemn,
Reflect how hard the task to rival them!
Friends of the stage—to whom both Play'rs and Plays
Must sue alike for pardon, or for praise,
Whose judging voice and eye alone direct
The boundless pow'r to cherish or reject,
If e'er frivolity has led to fame,
And made us blush that you forbore to blame,
If e'er the sinking stage could condescend
To soothe the sickly taste, it dar'd not mend,
All past reproach may present scenes refute,
And censure, wisely loud, be justly mute!—

Oh! since your *Fiat* stamps the Drama's laws,
Forbear to mock us with misplac'd applause.
So pride shall doubly nerve the actor's pow'rs,
And reason's voice be echo'd back by ours!—
This greeting o'er—the ancient rule obey'd,
The Drama's homage by her herald paid,
Receive *our* welcome too—whose every tone
Springs from our hearts, and fain would win your own.
The curtain rises—May our stage unfold
Scenes not unworthy Drury's days of old!
Britons our judges, nature for our guide,
Still may *we* please: long—long may *you* preside.

Such is the pæan which won the crown—a pæan which it may be remarked has most rigidly adhered to the hints of the Morning Chronicle, and most carefully abstained from any allusion to our victorious arms on the Peninsula, or any mention of the glories of a Wellington. In this respect it departs from the ancient model; and, for our parts, we cannot see why a subject which would ennoble any strain should have been so *guardedly excluded* from one where it would have been so appropriate—the Opening of a NATIONAL THEATRE! Perhaps it is more consonant to Lord Byron's British feelings to dwell on such scenes as the Convention of Cintra (which he seems to do with great complacency, see page 347 of the Satirist for October), than on the splendid achievements which have succeeded it—certain we are, that it would be more agreeable to a proportion of his judges to hear nothing, than to hear a great deal about the war on the Peninsula. But passing by this, which *may have been* an *accidental* circumstance, we shall proceed methodically to dissect this Address, and endeavour to ascertain whether it possesses paramount claims on our admiration for the pathos and sublimity of its sentiments, the grandeur of its expression, the energy and magnificence of its

style, the boldness and justice of its metaphors, the harmony of its numbers, and the elegance of its diction.

We shall commence our anatomical operation by stating, that, in our opinion, there are exactly, out of seventy-three, two unexceptionably good lines—namely, the fifteenth and sixteenth. They breathe a sweet tenderness, and are most poetical as well as most appropriate and pleasing. The four introductory lines are neither remarkable for excellence nor defect, and the only critical remarks that occur to us upon them is, that the word "beheld," in the third, is again employed in the fifth line, which is indicative of carelessness, and the want of attention to the task of giving a final polish to the poem. There is also no small measure of presumption in the allegation, that on the fall of Drury "Shakspeare ceased to reign." The performances at Covent Garden Theatre, for the two following years, afford the best refutation to this calumny. Would we could say they continued to do so—but "the hour of their glory is past." With the fifth line we begin to get into the clouds of poetry, which leave the clear sky of common sense and meaning in a state of obscuration. Omitting the apostrophe, which is a plagiarism, and has nothing to do with the sense, the sentence in *plain prose* is as follows:

"Ye who beheld the massy fragments, riven through clouds of fire, chase the night from Heaven like Israel's pillar"—which, to our humble apprehension, is downright nonsense, for we can neither understand what are "*clouds of fire*," nor how any "*massy fragments*" could "*chase the night from Heaven.*" This is a confusion of metaphor on the part of the author, who naturally assimilating fragments of a building to a pillar, forgot that this pillar was a pillar of fire. The image is very ill chosen, and the comparison most imperfect. In line ten, "*red shadow*"

is a vile phrase, for the *reflection* of flames upon the water is not, correctly speaking, a *shadow*; neither is it *red*, but of a bright *yellow* colour. In lines thirteen and fourteen, the catastrophe, which has already been described as "clouds of fire,"—"like Israel's pillar,"—"a column of revolving (i. e. *revolutionary*) flames,"—and a "a volumed blaze," we are now told, is *lightnings* awful as those of the skies,

——"and ghastly shone
The skies, with lightnings awful as their own;"

so that it is evident that the burning of Drury Lane Theatre not only "startled Thames," but even made the skies look "ghastly," though we can see no reason for so much terror, as the theatrical lightnings were not *more* awful than those belonging to the skies; and therefore it might be supposed the said skies needed not to have looked pale at the sight of what they were accustomed to. Line eighteen, we are *modestly* informed, that the late "pile" of Drury was "the mightiest in our isle," and asked if the present not less aspiring building shall know the same favour with the former, that is, the favour of a shrine for Shakspeare? To which question, for the information of Lord Byron, Messrs. Whitbread, Arnold, and Co. we will answer, that the British Public is too liberal not to reward sterling desert, and therefore, if they will act good plays, and procure good actors, they will meet with all the success they merit, and even with a degree of favour beyond their mere deservings. But, if it be a "shrine for Shakspeare," and "worthy" of him (line twenty), it ought to be a temple where his divine genius is worshipped with becoming rites by an illustrious priesthood, and not an altar where his mangled form is devoted and strewed around as a sacrifice by officiating curates of the lowest order. Perhaps *Mr.*

Elliston, in *Hamlet*, as he spoke the Address, will know what we mean, take the hint, and avoid TRAGEDY as his bane without an antidote. The author, however, answers his own question in a more summary, and, to the theatrical managers and performers, in a more satisfactory manner than we have done; for he, like an oracle, exclaims, "Yes, it shall be"—and why? Because "the magic of that name defies the scythe of time, the torch of flame (flame *personified*) still consecrates the scene on the same spot, and bids the Drama be where SHE hath been." This conclusive reasoning is confirmed by the New Theatre itself, for

"This fabric's birth attests the potent spell;"

and, therefore, if the new renters complain of curtailed privileges, and promises kept to the ear but broken to the understanding, they will perceive that they have not to blame Mr. WHITBREAD's human arts for *jockeying* them out of their *five hundreds* at half the common rate of interest, and the surrender of legal prior claims; but that the potent spell of Shakspeare's name has tickled them out of their money, and built a fine shrine, where others (not they) may worship him!!

Following this, is a retrospect of the stage, which introduces Mrs. Siddons, Garrick, and Sheridan in the character of Menander, who was styled by the Athenians the "Prince of the *New Comedy*," and drowned himself *in water*. The numbers in which these favourites are noticed flow in an easy and elegant manner, and convey to us in musical language the important information, that Mrs. Siddons made her first, and Mr. Garrick his last, appearance at Drury Lane; and that the Muse of Brinsley having, like the Sleeping Beauty, fallen into a heavy slumber, he has "ceased to write." We are moreover ad-

vised not "to *hoard* our honours *idly* for the *dead:*" which is precisely one of those counsels which we cannot comprehend at all; it speaks a language little becoming in the noble writer.

> "Dear are the days which made our annals bright,
> Ere Garrick fled, or Brinsley ceas'd to write;
> Heirs to their labours, like all high-born heirs,
> Vain of *our* ancestry, as they of theirs.

Query—What does this mean? How can an *actor*, in which character the Address is delivered, be vain of the ancestry of a dramatic *author*; or what right has Mr. Elliston, either in *propria persona*, or as Hamlet the Prince of Denmark, to claim the paternity of Mr. Sheridan, either in *propria persona*, or as Menander, the Prince of the New Comedy? But if, on the other hand, the vain boast of ancestry of these high or garret-born heirs, refers only to Siddons and Garrick, we step forward boldly to proclaim them as *arrant bastards* as ever *usurped honourable names.*

The comparison of Banquo's glass is the most ingenious and beautiful image in the poem, and its appropriate introduction excuses its want of originality. The *pun* upon the

> "Immortal names emblazon'd *in our line*"

is unworthy of the rest of the passage. As Young Rapid says, "*Oh! sink the shop.*"

Next comes (line 52, *et seqq.*) an appeal to the audience —the "friends of the stage"—

> Whose judging *voice* and *eye* alone *direct*
> *The boundless pow'r* to cherish and reject—

which said couplet comes under our sentence with the *incomprehensibles.* The judging eye is palpable enough, but the judging voice is not so *clear*: and as for their

directing a boundless power"—to our shame be it spoken, we can neither make head nor tail of it. Oh, for a second edition, with notes and explanations!

Allons donc! The plot thickens—

"If e'er frivolity has led to fame."

How absurd the idea! Frivolity never did and never can lead to fame, though it may lead to profit, being forced down the public throat by the persevering folly of those to whom the direction of the stage has been unluckily transferred. It is idle and impudent gossiping to accuse the public of "sickly taste," and of debauching the drama. How could such taste originate, if the mawkish dishes had not been first presented by our theatrical cooks, and served up with gaudy garnishing, till the palate of the unskilful multitude was vitiated, and the opinion of the well-informed and judicious few completely overwhelmed? In this they have persisted till even the "groundlings" exclaim against the practice, and never did there exist a more universal sentiment than that now in force against Melo-Dramas, Romantic Plays, Spectacles, and the whole course of trash with which the stage is inundated. There is a general outcry against them; and yet they are represented nightly, to the exclusion of every thing like legitimate Tragedy, Comedy, or even Farce.

Did the public voice call for horses, and elephants, and dogs, and asses, that the "*sinking* stage" should "*condescend*" and "*blush*" to use them? No! The theatrical managers were the sole cause and source of these disgusting and disgraceful puppet-shows. But we have gone sufficiently into this subject elsewhere, and shall lash the system till either the managers are shamed or starved out of it, and we are again enabled to enjoy a BRITISH STAGE.

There is nothing further remarkable in the Address, save that it *proclaims* Mr. ELLISTON to be the "Herald of the Drama," in which case, perhaps, he might have performed another part in the opening Tragedy with more skill and eclat than he played Hamlet—the part we allude to is, that of the "Herald of the Morn," "*the Early Village Cock*," which "thrice does salutation to the morn." It concludes with two horribly poor lines, which are ushered in by a couplet that may literally be said to contain a stage-trap, through which either the Ghost in the play, or this ghost of a poem, might most fitly disappear to be seen no more, and never to be regretted.

Such is the famous Drury Lane Address.

Parturiunt montes nascitur ridiculus mus.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SATIRIST.

SIR,

I OBSERVE, in your last number, you have candidly inserted Mr. ACKERMAN's defence of his *late* OWL, upon which, as the cause of controversy is removed, I shall beg leave to offer only a very few brief observations.

In the first place, I have to remark, that Mr. Ackerman does not venture to deny the charge which I brought against him, but appeals for his justification to "every one who walks the streets of London." An appeal, Sir! which, from the *trifling difficulties* attendant upon taking the verdict, is precisely of the kind most convenient for

a lame cause. He afterwards confesses, indeed, that numerous letters, intended for the Post-office, were continually thrust down the maw of his fowl; and does recollect my calling upon him for an explanation relative to a letter which I unwillingly intrusted to the bird, and found, from experience, that it was *no bird of passage.* He consequently boasts of his civility, in which I now assure, as I before assured you, I was so far mistaken as to think impertinent. As this gent. however, says, that he intended to be polite, I must take the will for the deed, at the same time stating, that it was the most aukward attempt at courtesy I ever beheld, and strongly reminded me of the graceful demeanour of a dancing bear, which, amid all his *congés,* is yet a rough, clumsy, growling, savage brute.

Your correspondent hints, that a partnership had subsisted between him and the Goddess of Wisdom, who kindly allowed her own bird to port himself in the window of the shop; and takes great credit to himself for not "betraying ladies' secrets." With regard to the first of these points, I have merely to observe, that if ever so unlikely a partnership existed, it is now at least satisfactory to know that it is dissolved, and the emblem of union taken away. ACKERMAN, MINERVA, and Co. was indeed a firm too heterogeneous to last long. With respect to the second matter, I confess I do not know that this defendant is guilty of betraying ladies' secrets, but have rather reason to believe that his habits (or let me say, the habits of his Owl) were of an opposite nature, and more inclined to the *discovery* than the *disclosure* of private business in which the fair sex were concerned. At all events, I can vouch for one instance in which a lady's secret, however *curiously* obtained, could not

again be wrested from this gallant spirit—he certainly would not betray my letter!

With thanks for your kind indulgence,

I am,

Mr. Satirist,

Your faithful servant and admirer,

A NAVAL OFFICER.

TO THE SATIRIST.

SIR,

IN your last number, shooting folly as it flies, you took a tolerably correct aim at Romeo Coates, Mr. Beverley the Richmond Theatrical Manager, and the notorious Anthony Pasquin; and, in my opinion, in a very sportsmanlike manner *bagged* the whole leash of birds—as fair a covey of game as ever Satirist marked and *brought down*. I observe too, Sir! that at the conclusion of the report to which I refer, you apologized for saying so much on the silly subject; but there is with this apology a *salvo*, which induces me to hope that a little more upon it, *being new*, will yet not be unacceptable either to you or your readers, and the more especially as there is something beyond mere absurdity and affectation in these men, at least in some of them, to whom the trite proverb of "more —— than fool" may be most veritably applied. Allow me to add, that, if your intention be not only to punish vice but to lash folly, they will cross you in your expedition, and you may as well attempt to avoid the daylight as to avoid their worships. Folly and the "Lady-killing Lothario" are now so identified, that

it were as well to attempt to sever a Jack-pudding from his *Fools-cap*, as to separate the latter from the paper on which a lively censure of the ridiculous buffoons of the age is imprinted.

Believing that a work like the Satirist, if properly conducted, may be of infinite use to a nation, I rejoice to see that, pursuing legitimate objects, you lacerate with vengeful stripes exalted guilt and dangerous crime, and content yourself with giving "petty larceny vices" a few smart bastinados; and, what I consider to be still more praise-worthy, that you abstain from dragging private iniquity, however tempting the theme, before the public tribunal. If the subject of the present communication, therefore, were contented to abide in native obscurity; to enjoy the fortune which, luckily for him he had not to earn, in a manner becoming his station, or in fine to comport himself like the world, and behave as gentlemen of the rank to which he pretends behave, I will confess to you, that I would consider him not to be a fair butt for the shafts of ridicule—an object of a feeling bordering most nearly on contempt. But when the study of a man's life appears to be to attract the gaze of fools, to excite the wonder of the ignorant, and to call forth at once the notice and the pity of the sensible portion of his fellow creatures, surely such a person is a fit mark for satire—in fact he satirizes himself, and must rather be obliged than offended by the *flattering* attention you have paid to him. Even I will aid him in his views, and if notoriety be his wish, he shall have more of it through me than he could attain by his curricle after the fashion of a certain vase—his cocks, or *crowing tricks*—or even through his *inimitable* performances upon the stage.

The puffer of this tragedy-struck hero, whom you so ably exposed in the Satirist for October, has endeavoured

to excuse the consummate vanity and conceit of his principal in supposing he had any talents for the stage beyond what were calculated to excite derision, by imputing his mountebank exhibition at Richmond to CHARITY; and "we should be happy (exclaims this elegant and *feeling* writer) if every man of fortune could produce so noble an excuse for being occasionally eccentric." This advertisement, you well observed, savoured more of ostentation than of real benevolence; and the correspondence I now enclose to you will prove, that your conjecture was founded on a just appreciation of the mind of the "Lady-killing Lothario," and of the veracity of his obsequious newspaper panegyrist.

It appears that an application was made to the Lady-killer by a Lady of some interest to the literary world, the daughter of the friend and biographer of the Eng sh Lexiphanes, Dr. Samuel Johnson, to whom the said Lady-killer, as you will remark in the sequel, was under very considerable obligations, for *delicate* services, to enable him to woo another Lady of immense fortune, who was, however, too knowing either to be killed or caught by our Inamorato. Miss E. Boswell, whose misfortunes are before the public, having solicited from the gallant Lothario the loan of *Two Guineas* (I believe) till November, that Performer, whom, as above stated, she had so materially obliged; that very gentleman returned the following answer, in a good schoolboy-like scrawl—

"Dear Madam,

"I have several hundred Pounds to pay in a few days, and I must be candid enough to tell you, that my own honor must be consider'd *above all others*, and *haply* for me that I can liquidate my Bills on the Inst.

"*Was* I to listen to the numerous applications for

Money I shou'd not be worth a farthing. I have lent a great deal of Money to various Persons since I arriv'd in England; I have given all up as a loss, and have some time left off being a lender.

"Should any evil dispos'd Persons impose on you, or Insinuate this, that, or the other, about my Indulging Myself at the Theatre, *or of what* Society I may be in, they are welcome to indulge themselves in the favourite persuit of Scandal.

"My name has been seen to Government Bills at the Treasury, Navy Office, Board of Admiralty, and Transport Board, Mr. Kentsh in Baker Street, at Lloyds Coffee House, at the Strand Bridge Office, Turners and Co. West-India Merchants, Messrs. Bayleys Stock-Brokers; and Messrs. Thomas Coutts and Co.s Books will prove my *respectability* much more than I could by talking of myself for a month.

"I understand that your Brother is a Man of Fortune: and as a Man, I cannot *but think that*, did he know of your situation, *but that* he wou'd act in that fraternal way *as* your situation requires.

"I am,

"Dear Madam,

"With respect, your obedient servant,

"Robert Coates."

Addressed to "Miss Boswell, 3, Tavistock Court, Covent Garden."

Such, Sir, is, *verbatim et literatim*, the elegant, classical, feeling, generous, grateful, and charitable return made by the Lady-killer to this *touching* application. What are we then to think of his *Pasquinaded* Charity? Perhaps your readers may have dipped into that illustrious and facetious author Joe Miller, where, if they

went to the right page, they would find that a certain Mendicant once meeting a Parson, begged alms of him and was refused. "For Heaven's sake, give me but one penny," said the beggar.—"I will not," said the priest. —"One halfpenny, to save me from starving," quoth the beggar.—"I must not," quoth the priest.—"Only one farthing, for the love of charity," cried the poor wretch.—Not a stiver would the churchman disburse.—"Then, in the name of God (exclaimed the importunate solicitor), afford me your blessing."—And the good Samaritan raised his hands over the beggar's head to pour down his benediction upon him; when, lo! the graceless ragamuffin rejected the holy unction, saying, "No, Master Parson! you may keep your prayers with your money, for if they had been worth one farthing you would not have bestowed them!"

Thus we may speak of the charity and charitable disposition of the Richmond Lothario—if his *acting had been worth one farthing* he would have kept it with his hundreds of pounds, that his honour might "*haply be consider'd above all others.*" Is it not a shame to hear such a fellow as this parading about his charity, or hiring newspaper puff-writers to blazon his munificence?—But what could be expected from a person who imagines that "*respectability*" consists in having his name known to *Bills* at the Treasury, or Coutts's, as well as to Bills at the Haymarket and the Richmond Theatres? Why, such a man never had feeling enough to be able to portray one generous or lofty passion on the stage.

That he was under some little obligation to the applicant, whom he so meanly and cold-bloodedly rejects, is evident from the following reply to his letter, which is written with some marks of that feminine irritation a refusal so *pointed* was likely to induce:

"I have received your letter.

"I do not repent of having applied to you as a supposed devotee to the stage, *au contraire*, as it would have been doing you injustice not to have put it in your power to aid one of its disciples. I shall have you to add to the list of nominal patrons; but should have been more gratified by having had it in my power to add you as a real one in the hour of need.

"I am, your obedient servant,

"EUPHEMIA B. BOSWELL."

"*P. S. I shall thank you to send me the Copy of Lines I wrote for you to send to Miss Tilney Long!!!!!!* I am urged to publish them.

"The want of liberality in my affluent Brother gives me a greater claim to the protection of strangers. You had a Brother also unkind, had you not?

"Is it true, you are to stand for Westminster?"

Here, Mr. Satirist, we have a new light thrown upon our hero. Not only an "Amateur of Fashion," but an adorer of Miss Tilney Long—a lover and a politician. Thou man with the long name, "Wellesley Tilney Long Pole, &c. &c. &c. look well to thy treasure—only reflect what a rival you have had, and how dangerous a Lothario he may yet prove to thy conjugal felicity! Burdett and Cochrane, bless your stars that your election is secure—consider what an opponent, in the city of Westminster, you might have experienced in this seducing, captivating youth!

I know not whether the lines intended for Miss Long were ever presented by the "Apollo" of the Morning Herald Critic; but rather believe they were not, as it is impossible to conceive that his elegant address, prepossessing countenance, lovely person, and winning ways,

could have been unsuccessful, if backed by the Muse, though only at second hand. And, moreover, who could have made a better guardian of this dame's noble fortune, than the prudential Lothario, who so wisely "*have some time* left off being a lender?" Then consider his "respectability," and his well-known reputation for *Billing*; and, above all, his erudition—as proved by the foregoing letter more than by talking of himself for a month. He must have been the man after all, had his merits been known, and Miss Long would have been husbanded in that advantageous "way *as* her situation required."

But I have encroached rather largely on your limits, and I trust have said enough to unmask the false pretensions to humanity, charity, and theatrical patronage, set up for this Popinjay. I shall, therefore, take my leave of the subject, by recommending it to men of mean souls and very paltry qualifications, not unnecessarily to push themselves forward into notice as magnificent ornaments to society, and the *Mœcenas'* of the age. By so doing they only incur scorn, expose their unworthiness, and render themselves amenable to the Satirist, and its friend and admirer,

ANTI-HUMBUG.

THE INVASION OF CANADA.

Introduction to Canto the First.

To SAMUEL WHITBREAD, *Esquire.*

To thee, my Sam, nor think me vain,
The Poet writes at Drury Lane:
But do not start, alarm'd, and guess
"Here comes *another prize Address.*"

With such I trow you are so tired,
You almost wish the whole were fired:
Such honours *Lords* may know to gain,
"They *pass the wit of simple swain.*"
It would have made my Whitbread smile,
To see the wonderment and toil,
Which, though it ne'er were his intent,
Were caus'd by his advertisement.
The public, ere the bard they knew
Who won, cried, 'twill be *Lord knows who.*
Chang'd is their note; the cry is now,
The prize was gained *the Lord knows how.*
Those who could the *wise Judgment* spy,
Ere yet it met the public eye,
Admir'd it, and must still admire on;
For such their zeal, they said of Byron,
Soon as 'twas known he'd written one,
The *Lord be prais'd*, his *will be done!!*

October month is chill and drear,
But still I love *October* cheer:
And thou, my Sammy, can'st inspire
Almost as much as *thine entire.*
Fain would I tune my humble lay
To thee, oh Sam! and Drury's play—
To thee who, equal to the task,
Can fill a playhouse like a cask:
But other subjects claim my Muse;
Yet one short line she can't refuse.

When I behold the *temple* rais'd
In one short year—I stand amaz'd
To see externally in Drury
A building splendid as thy brew'ry,
A pile, which seems (so *grand* and *plain*)
The *Workhouse* of great Drury Lane;

Though *certes* no man ever your house
Would hint *most distantly*'s a *poor-house.*
To see this sight fills with surprise,
And makes me almost doubt my eyes:
But when the lobby I explore,
I would but ask for one thing more;
And that is this—thy phiz in stone,
To make thy name for ever known.
Close to that spot, where Shakspeare's form,
For ever fix'd, for ever warm,
As guardian of the fire below,
Seems with its genial heat to glow,
Where bending o'er the smoke and flare,
As surely was thy wish and care;
He forces all who see, to say,
That Drury boasts, as well she may,
Not only great Apollo's lyre,
But e'en immortal *Shakspeare's fire*;
And when the coals are burnt to dust,
It may be said—indeed it must,
For not to say it were unfair,
His ashes too are treasur'd there:
Close to this spot thy figure dear,
To those who plays, debates, and beer,
Have learn'd to relish, thou should'st stand,
A pot of porter in thy hand,
As tend'ring, while thus rais'd on high,
To Shakspeare, who must needs *be dry*;
And as the fire beneath, which glows,
Was given by thee (as I suppose),
"The man," I'd fain inscribe thy niche,
"Who warm'd old Billy Shakspeare's breech."

And now, my Sam, we'll quit the play,
To ramble to America;
There wilt thou see, and see with pride,
Thy fam'd predictions verified;
How dim have been our ruler's eyes,
And Madison how keen, how wise.
Who after this will wish to pack
Thee off, to write *Moore's Almanack?*
But here, my Brewer and my Friend,
My artless lines and scroll must end;
Prepare then for a theme most dear—
Of Yankey deeds in arms to hear.

THE INVASION OF CANADA.

CANTO THE FIRST.

"War!" thunder'd Madison, the sage,
"War against England will we wage,
And soon we'll make her mourn our rage,
For, hang it, whose afraid?
What though she sweep us from the seas?
And burn our cities as she please!
We still can run her with ease;
We'll Canada invade!!!
Come here, my gallant General Hull,
I love thee for thy strength of skull,
Which truth to say's so thick:
Soft as it is, and like *hog's-lard*,
Who strove to break by hitting *hard*,
Would surely stick his stick.
Take then the centre army straight,
And march to break each English pate
That dare your force oppose;
And tell them that, unless as friends
They calmly let us gain our ends,
We'll treat them just like foes."

II.

The hero Hull would lose no time,
But eager, Fame's steep hill to climb,
He answered, "Mister President,
I'm off directly, be content,
Nor entertain one fear;
For soon the army I command
Will conquer every inch of land;
I'll march be sure without a check,
From Fort Detroit to Quebec,
As quickly will appear;
And even that, my ardour warm,
Assailing soon, must take by storm;
Nay more, Sir, if to soothe your ire,
It is your pleasure, wish, desire,
I'll bring it to you here!!"

III.

His host has march'd, and now behold
The English in retreat,
Though nearly twenty strong we're told,
The foe they dar'd not meet.
The skill the Yankies all display,
And fiery ardour for the fray
Delights their General brave:
To reach the English is their prayer,
And all with raging fury swear
Their foes shall find a grave.
Nor vain their boast, for soon in fight,
Defeat the English rue;
One sent to everlasting night,
"Kill'd, wounded, missing, two."
The General now, not less humane
Than modest, calm, and wise,
Resolves, lest blood be shed in vain,
To ope the people's eyes:

And calling all around his tent,
War's dread effusions to prevent,
The thoughts which fill'd his lab'ring breast
The hero thus aloud express'd,
To make the rude Canadians know,
How wise, how generous their foe.

THE PROCLAMATION.

IV.

People of Canada, I come
With trumpets' sound, and beat of drum,
To fill you all with fears;
To arms we fly from prosperous peace:—
That state of calm repose must cease,
We've known for thirty years.
England's aggressions have bereft
Of all our patience, and but left
The choice of manly opposition,
Or unconditional submission.

V.

The Yankey Doodles I command,
Advancing now invade your land;
Waves o'er your soil, ordain'd by Fates,
The flag of the United States:
But though tremendous we appear,
Canadians, you may banish fear;
Our prowess is to you no stranger:
Yet, if you peaceably will grant,
All you possess that we may want,
To you 'twill bring no danger.

VI.

Not to make enemies I come,
But enemies I came to find,
And though you think 'tis all a hum,
Yield, and you'll find me very kind.

I will not injure, but protect:
Pause ere my offers you reject;
For horror, and confusion dire,
O'erwhelm ye, if ye wake my ire;
As, arm'd with thunder like a god,
Carnage and death await my nod;
'Tis mine to bid war's horrid flood
At pleasure inundate your fields with blood.

VII.

Divided by the Atlantic's waves,
And pathless wilds, from England's distant shore,
You all must feel yourselves but slaves,
Who long her tyranny in silence bore.
I do not ask you to avenge your wrongs—
That task to me, to me alone belongs;
Nor will I on you press
England's injustice to restrain;
For all of which we now complain
Myself will soon redress.
Be your own masters, rise, be free,
And join the heroes under me;
I wot that dolt indeed is dull
Who won't seek fame with General Hull.

VIII.

Th' United States have pow'r to grant
All the security you want;
This is no vain, no pompous boast—
Look at my formidable host,
And say, did England e'er produce
A band so dauntless, blithe, and spruce?
I tender you your liberty,
Political and civil,
Religious too, which else you'll see
Sent packing to the devil.

Prosperity besides I bring,
Which from that liberty must spring.

IX.

Moreover, in my country's mighty name,
And in great Madison's—well known to fame,
I promise to protect you, and your rights.
Remain at home and cultivate your lands,
But 'gainst your brethren dare not raise your hands;
Or on you as our prey we pounce like kites:
Though let me tell you, human eye
Like *kites* will never *see us fly.*
'Tis on my soul *prophetic* stamp'd,
Of Heaven's own seal, I feel the heat;
Our courage never will be damp'd,
To make us *home again retreat.*
Your fathers fought for what we boast,
Freedom and Independence;
Hail here, as friends, our gen'rous host,
Who gratis give attendance.
You shall be freed from tyranny,
I promise it again—
We'll give you as much liberty,
As Buonaparte gave Spain.

X.

Canadians, could a fear but cross my mind,
I would not thus myself express;
Had I one doubt of any kind,
Of fall, of ultimate success,
I might assistance ask of you,
But that I do not seek;
Let others such a course pursue,
Who feel that they are weak.

I come for every thing prepar'd,
In excellent condition;
A force which must, at nothing scar'd,
Look down all opposition.
Contingencies cannot arise
I'm unprepar'd to meet;
England as soon shall scale the skies,
As General Hull defeat.
And more, this force, which ev'ry heart must thrill,
Is but the vanguard of a greater still.

XI.

But, mark me; if, oh weak and rude,
Heedless and blind to your own good,
You dare my army to oppose,
And aid or countenance my foes:
If you to take up arms are known,
Audaciously to guard your own;
If you presume with us to fight,
And impiously defend your right;
Then, mark my words, where'er we meet,
Your troops as enemies we'll treat.
Judge from *our friendship*, what must be
Our conduct in hostility.
Calamities and horrors then
Of war, shall stalk before your ken,
If you the savages let loose—
That is, unless you soon reduce
The Indians, and drive all away,
Lest they should mingle in the fray
(Unless indeed they choose to start,
And take of General Hull the part),
If they our children seek to harm,
Or fill our women with alarm,
(Though *I'm no woman* as you see,
And so they ne'er can *frighten me*):

Then with their tribes to be a match,
We'll cut the throats of all we catch;
And as we soon shall catch you all,
In turn of course you all must fall;
And this, without more botheration,
A war prove of *extermination.*

XII.

The first stroke of the tomahawk,
The first slice of the scalping knife,
Bids desolation forward walk,
And Yankies spare no English life.
All they may prisoners make, ALL, ALL,
Or lean, or fat, or short or tall,
Under this sentence lie:
No white man by an Indian's side
Shall quarter have, whate'er betide,
But instant he shall die.

XIII.

I will not doubt your love of liberty,
Your courage, and your *reverence for me*,
(For of myself I *modesty* may say,
You see not *such a hero* ev'ry day.)
Join me as volunteers, you shall be kept,
Your services I'll readily accept.
I see you stare, doubtless surpris'd to find
That I to grant *such honours* am inclin'd;
Freedom, security, and peace, I now
Offer, if humbly to my will you bow.
Security, reflect—for, to be sure,
'Tis no small matter here to be *secure.*
Destruction, slavery, and war expect,
If such advantages you dare reject:
For, having *killed you all*, to cause new tears,
We'll *send the rest* to slav'ry in Algiers.

You've heard my terms, accept them or refuse,
Choose them directly, choose, but wisely choose;
And, oh! may He who sees our cause is just,
In whom, invading you, we put our trust,
Who from on high his aid will surely lend,
To punish you, who yet did ne'er offend,
May He, who holds the fate of nations, guide
Your judgment wisely, fairly to decide;
To take that step which must your joys increase,
And give you happiness, repose, and peace.
My heart yearns *for you*, with affection full
May He incline *your hearts to General Hull.*"

(CANTO II. *dedicated to General* TARLETON, *in our next.*)

THE UNA-MONA-LOG-BUSBYS.

Who shall decide when DOCTORS disagree?

NEVER did any individual exert himself more zealously for a niche in the Satirist than *Doctor* Busby (not the reverend, nor the legal, nor the physical, but the *musical* Doctor Busby); and his aspiring son George Frederick Busby, *Esquire*, has proved himself

The worthy offspring of a worthy Sire.

One can hardly speak of these poetical geniuses without hitching into rhyme. Every newspaper has teemed with the theatrical exploits of these heroes. They have courted notoriety, and have obtained it. Perhaps it would have been well if the learned Translator and spirited

Reciter of Lucretius had troubled themselves to remember that there are two species of fame, the one honourable and valuable, the other meretricious and despicable: that it is one thing to fill the trump of Eulogy, and another to replenish the mouth of Scorn. Heretofore we have observed the newspaper puffs of the *musical Doctor Busby* with silent contempt; quackery, medical, clerical, and literary, has become too common to call for animadversion from our pen till it bounds over the usual limits of toleration, and beards us with all the impudence of success, unrestrained by the modesty of merit.

It seems, however, that these Busbys have *puffed* themselves till, like the frog in the fable, they fancied they were as large as the ox. If they failed to impose on the public by their newspaper praises, to the honour of their ingenuity be it spoken, they at least succeeded in imposing on themselves: great from their own panegyrics, and *warm* from *Lucretius*, imagining themselves the first poets of the age, while the other baffled candidates for the Drury Lane Laurel bit their nails in private, and breathed forth curses, not loud but deep, against the tasteless Committee, these wonderful bards, in all the intemperate indignation of slighted superiority, resolved to bring their case before a public tribunal; and, if they had failed to afford general entertainment in one way, at least to produce it in another. The *musical* Doctor, with, as *Hudibras* says,

> ———a train
> Of *atoms* jostling in his brain,

and his now no less eminent son, have consequently, so far as in them lay, absolved the poet-judging Committee from the charge of partiality, and proved that it was possible for Addresses to be written inferior even to that of Lord Byron!!!

On Wednesday, the 14th October, George Frederick Busby, *Esquire*, made his first appearance on the boards of Drury Lane, for the purpose of delivering to the audience the rejected Address of his *musical* father, and of appealing to them for a verdict in its favour. But the company not being prepared for this novel performance, much discord and jarring ensued, and the young gentleman, after a very foolish exhibition of himself, was handed from the stage by a brace of Bow Street Runners. On the following night, however, the resolute Doctor, and his fiery son,

> Cui genus à proavis ingens clarumque paternæ
> Nomen erat virtutis, et ipse accerrimus ârmis,

having previously notified their intention by a circular letter, again attended at the Theatre, and insisted on a new and perfect trial; but with bad success, for the coffee and muffins of Queen Ann Street were still wanting to soften the rugged hearts of the auditory. In the boxes the Senior appears,

> ———Venit Apollo.
> Galle, quid insanis? inquit.

Apollo comes, and the *Gallery* exclaims, "How mad he is!" the Pit boasts the presence of the son; and from these stations they alternately harangue the house till, after great uproar and confusion, the Junior, at the earnest entreaty of the Doctor, is once more hoisted upon the stage, and permitted to spout his renowned Papa's Mona-logue. A more ludicrous scene was never presented than that which now ensued: shouts of "Off" and "On," bursts of laughter, and noises of every description, shook the new Temple, while the enraged bard was endeavouring to make himself heard, and enforcing his appeal by gestures and action the most extravagant

that can be imagined. His anxious progenitor was displaying similar convulsions aloft; and the pair presented a picture of frantic folly, such as was never before witnessed in a place of public exhibition. The Doctor had an engagement with the police, who laid their iron fangs upon him; but he made a glorious *sit* against them on the stairs, was rescued, and led back to his seat singing *to triumphe*. On the the stage below,

> The poet's eye in a fine frenzy rolling,
> Glancing from tier to tier, from Pit to Gall'ry,

poor George Frederick in vain attempted to make his thin small voice audible. A few lines were all that could be heard, and these were so absurd, that every couplet was drowned in shouts of mirth and ridicule. At length, tired and disgusted by this protracted exposure of one of the most lamentable failings in human nature, the audience were *for once* rejoiced to see the stage manager, Mr. Raymond, advance, and lead the exhausted stripling from behind the half dozen lamps, where he had paraded for half an hour, and with great filial ardour devoted himself to be made *(melancholy example!)* a common public laughing-stock.

We hasten to conclude this article, which in setting out we intended to treat ludicrously; but the picture of extreme frailty and vanity the subject embraces has warped us from our purpose, and so wrought upon our mind, that we could not help sliding into a tone more grave and severe than the apparent insignificance of the *objects* may warrant. We now bid the Doctor and his accomplished son farewell, with the expression of a hope, that they may have received a lesson which will teach them hereafter to be more cautious in obtruding their weakness and folly upon the general attention.

THE GENERAL ELECTION.

THE servants of the Crown having, in their discretion, advised the Prince Regent to dissolve the late, and convene a new Parliament, H. R. H. has exercised his royal prerogative to that effect (a prerogative never till now disputed and condemned), and caused another House of Commons to be called together, to advise and aid him in the discharge of those duties incumbent on him to perform in the present momentous crisis of affairs.

For this act, the executive authority has been arraigned by the advocates for shortening the duration of Parliaments, and with a singular felicity of inconsistency these persons have most loudly reprobated that decision which has prevented the last Parliament from continuing its session for the longest possible term of seven years. In these railings the most vituperative have been the Democrats and the partisans of Marquis Wellesley; but the Whig party have also joined in the hue and cry, and, as usual, noisily enough expressed their share of the disapprobation. Patriotism has of course been the stalking-horse of them all; but their real causes for dissatisfaction we need scarcely say have no relation to patriotism, but proceed from private interest and party disappointments.

The Democrats, who at another time would have been gratified by a matter which afforded a favourable opportunity for the promulgation of their disloyal sentiments, and a decent risk of creating a little confusion and disturbance in the country, could not help feeling that at this moment they had sunk into insignificance, and were sinking still more into that utter contempt and

abhorrence, which left them but small chance of succeeding, either in poisoning the ear, or agitating the bosom, of the nation. That they formed a proper estimate of their capabilities, the result of the Elections has clearly and happily demonstrated.

The partisans of Marquis Wellesley (we speak with reference to the tenets advanced by the apparently authorized agent of that nobleman, who enlivens the dull columns of the *Times Newspaper* with wondrous long *tirades* against ministers, under the signature of VETUS, a Latin word, which, being translated, means "*stale, musty, out of date, worn out*"—*vide* YOUNG'S DICTIONARY)—the Wellesley partisans are equally indignant at this dissolution of Parliament, because it has taken place at a time when there exists none of the heavy calamities which they have anticipated since the retreat of their patron, to overwhelm his imbecile successors in office, and restore him to power. Had ministers but waited another year, says *Vetus*, in his 12th Epistle, the aspect of affairs would have been so horrible in Spain, in Russia, in Sweden, in Sicily, in America, and Lord knows where! that in their appeal to the sense of the people they must have been ousted, kicked out, and disgraced —nay, he asserts they might have had the good luck to be brought to the block, and had their heads chopped off. Now, with all due respect and deference for this great and furious writer, we humbly conceive, that taking his own *data* as perfect, which we by no means do, ministers would really deserve all the opprobrious names he lavishes upon them, had they, merely to serve and amuse their political opponents, postponed the call of a New Parliament to precisely that period when it would be most ruinous to themselves. But ministers stand upon higher grounds, and, notwithstanding the im-

precations of *Vetus*, and the overweening vanity and ambition of the noble Lord whose cause he espouses, we have no doubt but, as they have already risen in public opinion, they will so conduct themselves and the business of the country, as to be even more highly estimated at any future time, when circumstances may render it advisable again to devolve on the people their most important right—the exercise of their elective franchise.

The third party, to whom we have alluded, the Whigs, have in like manner betrayed their angry feelings on this occasion; and their querulous censure has proceeded, not only from the nature of their temperament, which always induces opposition to the Government, but from a grief peculiarly their own—a self-conviction that they stood so deservedly low with the vast majority of the community, that their numerical force must be materially weakened, as it has been on the new Election.

Thus, because the time, although in every respect suitable and convenient to the country, did not coincide with their views, and fit their projects, these three parties have united in raising their patriotic voices against the dreadful crime of ministers, in taking the sense of the people upon their competency to fill the high station to which they had just been appointed. A proud and gratifying appeal it has been to them—a source of chagrin and confusion to *all* their adversaries! But this will appear more circumstantially as we proceed, according to our intention, to take a detailed notice of a few of the most prominent popular Elections, by which the sense of the country has been expressed; and we shall, therefore, here draw these general remarks to a conclusion.

The London Election claims precedency, and we willingly devote our earliest observations to that subject.

Seven Candidates started for the metropolis; Sir Charles Price, one of its representatives, having retired. Of these, Alderman Combe, Sir William Curtis, and Sir James Shaw, were the old Members: and the new aspirants were the Lord Mayor (who, however, declined the poll); Alderman Atkins, a man of sense and character, well known in the city for his ardent attachment to the politics of the Pitt school; and, *proh pudor!* the wise democratic Alderman Wood, and the notorious Robert Waithman.

As was to be expected, when a regular *census*, and not the clamour of a mob, determined the question, these two, calling themselves, and being called by their adherents, "*popular* Candidates," were left behind, by a triumphant majority upon the poll. First—of the first, according to the Aristotelian rule, we shall speak of the sapient Brewer's Druggist, the vender of quassia and nightshade for the manufacture of porter, *a trade*—or rather (to use memorable words) a practice at which our ancestors would have started with indignation. This person, whose modesty is equal to his talents, having, like all the other popular gentry, figured away in electioneering at the *expense of such fools* as could be *gulled into subscriptions*, has filled the public newspapers, out of their pockets, with his fulsome Addresses and Advertisements, in which it is difficult to say whether his vanity, stupidity, or want of sense, is most consummately apparent. In one of these personal puffs, he unblushingly tells the City Electors, that by returning him (amazing Matthew Wood!!) to Parliament, they "will not merely effectuate a tardy and hard-won triumph, but will insure an immediate and decisive victory to the great cause of Peace, Reform, and Religious Liberty." *Risum teneatis!* Oh wonderful block of Wood!

Again this man of understanding and modest unassuming worth says, "If you prefer *purity* to venality, *peace* to war, *reform* to abuse, *religious liberty* to unchristianlike persecution, and the *restoration of prosperity* to inevitable ruin, you may yet by your individual suffrages, and by a consentaneous and *noble* effort, prevent calamities so dreadful, obtain advantages so important, and realise the hopes which the recollection of your past labours and ardent patriotism cannot but excite," by choosing for your representative the mighty, the potent Mr. Alderman Wood!—On other occasions this *promising Politician* says, "I do not consider myself an *ordinary Candidate* upon an *ordinary occasion.*" Extraordinary Matthew Wood! "I must remind you that you have important and sacred duties to discharge to yourselves, to your children, to your country, and to the world; the whole empire observes your conduct with anxiety, intermingled with hope"—that you will return the admirable Matthew Wood!

"Your example has frequently animated the drooping advocates of freedom and peace: do not now doom them to despair"—by not sending to Parliament my block-head of Wood!

"Let every unpolled Elector hasten to maintain his independence, and to exercise his rights; and avert impending evils and degradation, by efforts proportionate to the emergence"—and do, for Heaven's sake, and for the salvation of your country, elect the now despairing *Wood Machine* at your service, or, *fatal conclusion!* "by your enemies, who know and create obstacles, it will be represented as an indication that the *present system is approved by you*—that the enlightened inhabitants of the metropolis disdain peace, liberty, and reform—and that *long your labours and past remonstrances have pro-*

ceeded only from a minority, ignorant, disaffected, or perverse." Truth for once out of the veritable mouth of the sagacious, foiled, and rejected piece of *Wood!*—" Your united suffrages may yet ensure the *triumph of myself*, and of the other Candidates, whose principles you approve. I therefore confidently expect that your votes will be no longer withheld; but that, with the enthusiasm of former times, you will hasten to employ the powers which you constitutionally possess, to contribute to the salvation of your native land."—Heavenly Mr. Wood! But we shall dismiss this self-opinionated great man with an extract from his farewell Address, which, however incredible it may seem, is, as well as the foregoing quotations, taken *literally* from his own publications.

" I would attempt to offer adequate acknowledgments to all the independent men, who, from principle alone, have afforded me their aid, but that they do not require such return—they are above my praise—*they are exalted by virtue even in this degenerate age.* The approbation of their consciences will be their reward. They have afforded an example which even their antagonists respect, and which *posterity may imitate, and must applaud.* If the example on their future efforts should be attended with future success, *they will become the Hampdens of other times*; and if they and myself should be destined to weep over the ruins of our country, we shall derive some consolation from the knowledge, that we have not accelerated her downfall, but have endeavoured to preserve and to restore the institutions of our fathers, and the glory of our native land."

Oh, burst our *sides*, for we can hold no longer.

We now come to the no less celebrated patriot Bobby Waithman, the candidate for representing the shops, and a gentleman (Heaven pardon us for the expression) possess-

ing as much cunning as any in London, and certainly as eligible from *art* as from *property*. The "No Shopkeeper," like the "No Popery," cry, first *invented* by themselves, and then retorted as the creation of their opponents, was a good party *ruse*, worthy of the ingenuity of this *Gentleman* and his supporters. Hoping the silly pretext would impose on some of the least informed of our *Shopkeepers*, whose ignorance might be caught by the empty sound, he advised his friends in their canvass to solicit votes "for Robert Waithman, a Shopkeeper"—as if his high mightiness condescended to take a lowly title, when, let the truth be spoken, his styling himself a Shopkeeper was the most *honest* and elevated title *he* could produce to a single suffrage. Not that the being a Shopkeeper is any superior recommendation to a Member of Parliament, as we cannot easily combine the general knowledge of a Senator with the particular information of a Retail Haberdasher, but because we do know Robert Waithman's only undisputed claim to *any* consideration is his keeping a shop. Surely, if that would not recommend him, neither his public nor his private character would do him that service!—A real member of the tribe of modern *Reformers*, who, destitute of private virtue, degraded below nature's common journeymen by some stamp of ignominy upon their names, set up for public purity, and endeavour to "gild all" by their pretensions to patriotism. Had Robert Waithman, the Shopkeeper, and, we give him this title not as a disgrace, but as his *highest honour*, had he been returned to serve in Parliament, how strange it must have sounded to hear perhaps the son of the Duke of Bedford agreeing with his *honourable* Friend from the city who spoke last, on the affairs of India, with which, from his long dealings in the manufactures of that country, he

must be supposed to be *politically* acquainted; or, stranger still! to hear a descendant of the Lord KENYON, *who directed a jury to discredit the* OATH *of this very man, because it was overborne by the fairest and most perfect testimony of several witnesses*, notice that the *assertions* of the *honourable* Member for the city were entitled to be received as conclusive on the subject matter in debate!!! Nay, it might be possible, that this patriot of "twenty years standing" might be reminded by some honourable friend of his application in 1806 to be appointed to the patriotic situation of *Receiver General of Taxes* for the city of London!!! Happily for him, and for the honour of the city, he has been spared these and greater mortifications, through the loyalty and good sense of the Metropolitan Electors. Of the advertisements of this *Gentleman* we shall say nothing more than that they breathe the same egotism with those of his worthy colleague Wood, and afford a further proof of the importance which a man may foolishly attach to himself—thus the great Robert Waithman, merely because his own august person was engaged in it, styles the late election "*the most important contest ever known* in this city."—Ha! ha! ha!

The WESTMINSTER ELECTION offers us no new ground for remark. The Burdett faction endeavoured to throw off Lord COCHRANE, as they threw off and murdered PAULL; but his Lordship having a number of friends among the Electors, these dirty intriguers basely compromised their designs, and lustily bawled out, "Burdett and Cochrane for ever!"—The despicable Baronet uttered one of his common rhapsodies, cried *nolo Episcopari*, and was elected by the acclamation of the mob on the day of nomination, no man of character deeming it worth his while to contest the *honour* of representing the city of

Westminster. In the advertisements on this occasion, the only paragraph deserving of notice was the following: "The expenses are defrayed by subscriptions, which are received by the treasurer, 110, Strand; G. and C. Puller, 139, Long Acre; J. Grant, 26, St. Martin's-le-grand; E. Langley, Esq. 18, Edgeware-road; at the Bar of the Crown and Anchor Tavern, Strand; and at the Committee-room, 38, King Street, Covent Garden." In which short sentence we see the source, essence, and origin of a great *deal of Westminster patriotism.* Subcription for ever!—*Viva!!*

In the borough of SOUTHWARK, *Sir Thomas Turton* took his leave with all the whining pomposity natural to a man of weak intellect, who, on his emptiness being discovered, is deserted by his former advocates.

In his lamentations he says, "I have sacrificed my whole time, my health, and my comforts, to promote the interests of my country, even at the expense of my own." (Poor man! he had better have attended to his own.) "I perhaps estimate my services too highly, but I must withdraw them." Oh dreadful loss! Southwark may never recover it, and the more especially as Jones Burdett, the brother of Sir Francis, *par nobile fratrum*, who stood for the vacancy, could only poll a paltry number of the lowest votes, and thus missed the object of his Jesuitical ambition, a seat, instead of Wardle, beside his worthy brother in Parliament.

Of SURREY we shall briefly state, that the gallant Turton being enabled to poll about a thousand votes *free of expense* (a *sine qua non* with him as well as with other patriots), stood for the county and lost it. This hero, whose disappointment in being sent officially to India converted him in a moment from a ministerialist into an oppositionist, is, therefore, likely to be con-

signed to that privacy for which his talents are so well calculated. If the beadle, or churchwarden, or constable, of his parish chance to die, and he is desirous of again figuring in public life, we will do all in our power to recommend him to the vacancy, unless, as is most probable, some more able and deserving candidate start for the place!!

There being no opposition for the borough of *Bedford*, Mr. Whitbread has only found an opportunity of issuing one of his accustomed long advertisements, for *the use of London readers.* On this curious document we have not room for comment. It consists of a most unconnected string of personal opinions, confused, ungrammatical, and absurd. But we readily excuse the errors of this production, on reflecting that the author was at the time deeply engaged on other theatrical compositions of equal importance and national consideration.

In Essex, *Burgoyne* has stood, and lamentably failed on the *popular* interest and *beggarly patriotic subscriptions!*

In Berkshire, one *William Hallett*, well known to the readers of the Satirist, has stood upon the same grounds, has professed patriotism at the same *cheap rate*, and, alas! has been played by the Electors a similar *dog's trick!*

In Hampshire—William Cobbett has had the audacious effrontery to offer himself for the choice of the Freeholders. The time has been, that when the character was lost the man would hide, and there an end—but now they rise again, with twenty mortal gashes on their names, to push us from our stools. Who would have believed it, that this sunk, debased, wretched poltroon durst have shown his face in public; far less, that he durst have persumed to solicit a vote as a Candidate

for a seat in Parliament? But there is a degree of infamy beyond shame. Mr. Cobbett was proposed by Mr. *Jones* (Gaol Jones, from the *House of Correction*, we suppose), and his nomination seconded by Mr. *Peter Finnerty*, a freeholder made for the occasion, and late from the *King's Bench and Lincoln Prisons!!!* The show of hands (he said) was in his favour, but he declined the poll!!

His Register of the following day, for which he charges One Shilling, contained the matter given in the note below, and *not one other word of original composition*, the whole No. being otherwise filled up with French and Russian Bulletins, which had previously appeared in every newspaper in town and country. We subjoin this *Twelvepenny imposition gratis*!*

Gwillim Lloyd Wardle, a worthy compeer of the last-named illustrious individual, has declined *Okehampton*, and for this very substantial reason, that his character too

* "*To the Freeholders of the County of Southampton.*

GENTLEMEN,

OUR triumph yesterday was as complete as ever I could have wished: for, though the Sheriff did, at last, decide the *disputed* point as to the *show of hands* against me, there was, I believe, not a single individual present, who was not convinced that a majority of the numerous assemblage were in my favour; or, rather, in favour of the honour and freedom of the country——In the course of my address to you, and which you received in a manner which convinced me that success must finally attend our exertions, I made many *assertions*, which assertions, I will, in my next Number, prove to be *strictly true* I am now absent from my books and papers; but, in my next, I will not only go fully into all the matters here alluded to; but will also lay before you a plan for effecting an emancipation from the trammels which now disgrace the Freeholders of this county. In the mean while, Gentlemen, I am

Your faithful friend,

"WILLIAM COBBETT."

Winchester, October 14th, 1812.

is so completely known, that there is not an honest man, of common sense and common spirit in the country, who would not spit in his face if he insulted him by soliciting his vote. In his advertisement he confesses, that he "brought forward the charge against the Duke of York, *as a specimen of corruption.*" The specimen has satisfied the country; the painful illusion of the moment has been dispelled; and the trebly base and villanous author and abettors of this detestable conspiracy are rewarded with the general scorn and indignation their nefarious deeds so justly merit.

The last of this gang of pitiful wretches to whom we shall allude is *Henry Hunt*, one of the candidates for Bristol, and, we grieve to add, an Election co-adjutor of Sir SAMUEL ROMILLY, a man we wish to esteem, but whose private virtues are most unhappily tainted by a strong adherence to party, and a warm predilection for certain opinions, which may be conscientious, but, it cannot be denied, are also most extravagant and dangerous. This *Hunt*, whose vulgarity and ruffianism we exposed in our last publication, has again met the reception he deserved at Bristol, having polled an insignificant number of votes. His advertisement runs in the form of an *Oath*—"I, Henry Hunt, do swear," &c. "So help me God"—as if the infatuated reptile was aware that his *word* would not be taken, and that the custom of St. Giles's requires the binding of a solemn asseveration in the name of the Almighty from those of the class of its population. For our parts, we consider his bare word to be as satisfactory and good as his oath!

The last particular Election to which we shall allude, is one of peculiar interest—Liverpool. The candidates, Mr. Canning, the favoured *eleve* of Pitt; Gen. Gascoyne, a ministerial member; Mr. Brougham, the present idol

of the opposition and democrat parties; Mr. Creevey, of the same kidney; and the gallant oppositionist, Gen. Tarleton. The two first were returned by majorities of 500 and 401 votes over the highest of the other candidates; and poor Tarleton learnt, from a poll of *six* votes out of 2,500, into what contempt his garrulous detractions from the merits of a Wellington had brought him. So may all the calumniators and opposers of that hero be humbled! We trust Mr. Canning will never desert, and we rejoice to see that he pledges himself never to desert, those principles which have raised him to his present proud distinction; but that he will, by the exertion of his pre-eminent abilities, confound the foremost of that faction in the Senate whom he has been *called* so successfully to thwart in their ambitious appeal to the people. We trust he will never forget that his constituents elected him as one of the men thus described by the Whipster Brougham, in one of his speeches at Clayton Square. "His opponents were the men who had supported the late Mr. Pitt in his measures which had brought the country to the dreadful state it was in. Some had called him the immortal Statesman now no more. All that he considered him immortal for was ruinous wars, bad policy, vicious measures, tyranny, and his apostacy from the cause of reform. His opponents and the remnant of his party could not do so much harm as Mr. Pitt did, as they had not the talents which he possessed. He stood there as the enemy of those measures, and all that he wished his memory to be immortalized for was to have wrote on a stone—*The enemy of Mr. Pitt's measures.*" Poor creature! we know not whether our pity or scorn most predominates, at hearing such "a puffed man" venture to deliver *his* opinion of a genius so transcendently above his miserable conception—"Ossa to a wart."

We shall now briefly bring this essay to a termination. On the 29th of September we rejoiced to have it stated, from that oracle of truth and patriotism the Morning Chronicle, that "*there is a spread of intelligence that has produced the happiest effects—a sense of moral order, a spirit of rational inquiry, a deep impression of Christian benevolence; and with it an earnest desire of giving security to our civil, and extension to our religious liberties.* A people with these sentiments deeply engraven on their hearts, *can neither be made the victims of corruption in support of unbridled power on the one hand, nor the dupes of licentious brawlers for anarchy on the other. The pure cause of genuine representation has acquired more strength within the last three years than it did in the three preceding Parliaments.*" For once we agree with this writer in his principles, and now ask our country to look at the result. The people thus fit for the choice of their representatives have rejected the whole gang of canting patriotic impostors. Cobbett, Waithman, Wood, Hunt, Hallet, Wardle, J. Burdett, Turton, Burgoyne, whether thy stood for borough, city, or county, have been disgraced and defeated. Thanks to the "spread of information"—thanks to the "sense of moral order"—thanks to the "spirit of rational inquiry"—thanks to the "deep impression of Christian benevolence"—thanks to the "earnest desire of giving security to our civil, and extension to our religious liberties"—thanks to those "sentiments deeply engraven on the hearts of the people," which precluded their being made victims to support the "unbridled power" of an ambitious Whig Aristocracy, or "the dupes of licentious brawlers for anarchy"—thanks, above all, to the "*strength*" acquired by the "pure cause of genuine representation," which has prevented the return to Parliament of men who would indeed, by their com-

munity, transform the Senate into that black, base, corrupt, depraved, and hateful thing they now only desire to have it believed to be.

Thanks also to the same causes which, in the most populous places of the empire, have most intelligibly pronounced to our modern Whigs the sense which the people entertain of their politics, conduct, and talents. At Liverpool, the brawling popularity of Brougham; at Bristol, the private virtues and abilities of Romilly; at Leicester, the literary fame of Roscoe; and, in fine, at not fewer than forty different contested Elections, the PARTY have met the same reception, and have either been unsuccessful if new candidates, or thrown out if formerly members.

It is thus the people have passed judgment between ministers and their opponents. We leave the ousted squad of the latter to the enjoyment of their *otium cum dignitate*. Those who have got in, we advise to change their *antibritish tone* of politics; or there may come another election, when they will be sent into the oblivion of their brethren!

THE NEWSPAPERS AND THE THEATRES.

ON the close of the English Opera season at the Lyceum, Mr. Raymond came forward with the following Address, which he had the temerity to speak, and which, among the many various kinds of Addresses that have of late abounded, seems deserving of an especial notice in the SATIRIST.

"Ladies and Gentlemen, according to annual custom I have the honour to present myself before you on this the last night of our season.

"It must be obvious to your notice, that the Proprietors have relaxed nothing of their exertions for your amusement, and that they have more than kept pace with their promise to present you with a round of *novelties* equal at least to the exertion of any other theatre whatever. They have, during their past short season, courted your approbation with a constant succession of varieties, which, if they have not always been so fortunate as to please you, have possessed, at least, this merit, that they were the best they could procure. The outcry against modern authors, Ladies and Gentlemen (which, if it be just, may fairly be retorted on modern critics), has become so popular, that the Proprietors have deemed it expedient to resort, in some degree, to those whose works have been stamped as sterling by your approbation. They have, therefore, selected Dramas, which, for various causes, have of late been lost to the stage; though unquestionably possessing intrinsic merit, from their having formerly been favourites with the public. These have been carefully revised and *altered* (aye, there's the rub), and, it is hoped, they have been so accommodated to their musical interpolations, that, as dramatic productions, they have suffered no injury. Much condemnation, however, with which the public did never appear to concur, has been uttered against the transformation of Mr. Cumberland's Comedy of *The Brothers*, into the third act Opera of *The Privateer*. But the author of this alteration has *flattered himself* that some chaste and elegant writing, and some strong delineation of character which had been forgotten, has, by this expedient, been rescued from utter oblivion, and that he has rather served the cause of Dramatic Literature, than injured it, by the revival of the Drama in question in an altered shape.

"Ladies and Gentlemen, I am desired to state to you, that the Proprietors, ever ready to bow to public opinion, are still confident in their reliance on public candour and on public

support. They are attentive to criticism, but unmoved by scurrility—your taste is their study, and so long as you continue to honour them by your patronage, and to guide them by your approbation, so long will they refuse attention to all that private animosity and personal mortification can dictate to their prejudice.

"The Proprietors, Ladies and Gentlemen, are determined to persevere, at any risk or expense, in the sincerest endeavour to deserve your applause. An experience of four seasons has convinced them that an English Opera is congenial to the taste of the English nation; and they are persuaded that this establishment, though yet in its infancy, under your fostering care, may become, in due time, a national ornament, and a national benefit. With this hope before them, and with heart-felt thanks for the indulgence their efforts have received, they desire me to conclude; and with no less sincerity on the part of the performers and myself, I beg leave to bid you respectfully farewell."

This joint production of Messieurs Raymond and Arnold, independent of barbarous grammar, affords a fair specimen of what the public has to expect from them in their more enlarged sphere of management at Drury Lane. They boast of the "round of novelties" they have produced, meaning thereby three or four old plays, farces, and pantomimes, moulded into the *new* shape of Operas!!! To exculpate themselves from the guilt of this paltry subterfuge, and to excuse themselves to the public for adopting this senseless and barren art of transmutation to be vamped up for originality, they accuse the critics of the day of "scurrility, private animosity, and personal mortification;" by which base principles they assert, these critics are induced to censure productions which are "honoured by the patronage" and approbation of the public. The soreness with which this charge is made proves at once its falsehood and in-

consistency. Were it true that the public had approved of these things, the arrows of criticism would have fallen short and innocuous; but those who exposed and reprobated such practices only pointed the general voice, as the beggarly treasury and unsuccessful season at the Lyceum proves incontrovertibly, to the internal mortification of Messrs. Raymond and Arnold. The latter, with all the modesty inherent in great genius, has the *honour* to state, that he, in mangling *Cumberland*, had "*rescued* the chaste and elegant writing, and the strong delineations of character," of that classical and admired author, "*from utter oblivion!!*" *Arnold rescue Cumberland from oblivion!* "This is too, too much!"—The critics not being of opinion with Mr. Arnold, that *he* had "served the cause of Dramatic Literature," are therefore assaulted with the opprobrious epithets we have before noticed. But another cause, besides the irritation of an unsuccessful author (or rather *mutilator*), contributed to swell this chagrined vanity to the pitch of fury which dictated this impudent Address. Two of a trade, it is hinted, can never agree; and the public ought to know that our managers of the Lyceum (now of Drury Lane), and their performers, dissatisfied with the critical remarks of others, have determined to be more fair and impartial, and to criticise themselves! They rightly deemed that a publication of their own might be more favourable to them than the Satirist, or any independent Journal unconnected with the theatres; and therefore started themselves as rival critics, and kindly condescended to offer observations on their own management and performances, in a monthly work called the *Theatrical Inquisitor*. A tolerable actor, but who was originally a better printer, has the conducting of this business; and, on the day when this essay shall first meet the public eye, a No. of

the said Inquisitor will issue from the OXBERRY Press, ornamented with the lovely phiz of that elegant youth as a frontispiece!! His portrait will appear, not in the character of a printer's devil, but devilishly well *thrown off* as *Signior Leo Luminati*—the illuminator of the town, in the matter of Theatrical Criticism! It is far from our wish to detract from a contemporary work; and we take this opportunity of recommending the above as likely to contain much Green-room information; no cruel observations to hurt the feelings of damned authors, and bebissed actors; no severe strictures on Mr. Raymond's management, or Mr. Arnold's hashed-up Operas; no harsh animadversions on Mr. Oxberry (the printer's) typographical or dramatical errors—but all will be candid, uninfluenced, pure, and impartial!!!

Closely connected with this subject is the recent manœuvres of the Committee of Drury Lane Management. It has been customary for the theatres to give, and the various newspapers of the metropolis to receive, a ticket of admission, in order that, through these channels of information, the public might be made acquainted with plays and players. But, having now a press of their own more agreeable to them than the public prints, these new managerial, theatrical, literary, performers and reviewers, not contented with bringing themselves before their own tribunal, were desirous of bringing every diurnal and hebdomedal critic, *in propria persona* under the same jurisdiction. They therefore addressed circular letters to the Editors of the different newspapers, to inform them that the *names* of the gentlemen who conducted the department for dramatic observations in their respective Journals might be transmitted to the Committee for insertion in the free list. *Free* enough it would soon have been, and these *names* handed in to the OXBERRY press,

whenever the persons to whom they appertained, by the justness of their strictures, offended any of these men of many professions, and multifarious pursuits, and variety of occupations, would not, perhaps, have experienced the same indulgence which is so liberally extended to bad plays, and indifferent actors. We believe this insidious proposition has been indignantly rejected by the newspaper Editors, and, in revenge (it is said), Messrs. Whitbread, Arnold, Raymond, and Co. intend to start *an Evening Daily Paper*, to be celebrated for the fairness, fullness, and impartiality of its Dramatic Critiques!!!!!! The cast of the parts is to be as follows:

The Impartial Political Department—Mr. Whitbread.
The Ditto Theatrical Writing Do.—Mr. Arnold.
The Ditto Ditto Acting Do.—Mr. Raymond.
The Ditto Ditto Poetical Do.—Lord Byron.
Corrector of the Press—Mr. Dibdin.
Printers—Oxberry, Lowndes, and Co.
Devils, Compositors, Pressmen, &c.—by the rest of the Company.

This work, it is anticipated, must give universal satisfaction, as *no fault is to be found* except in the political department; and we have hopes it may exist at least as long as its progenitor, set up by Mr. John Kemble, on the same principles—for he too thought it hard that players should not have word for word with the critics. *The Cabinet Daily Evening Newspaper*, under his auspices, published about sixteen or seventeen years ago, at Charing Cross, *lasted about seven weeks, and lost about Seven Hundred Pounds!!!!!!*

THE MOON.



(To be continued Monthly.)

LORD BYRON AND THE EDINBURGH REVIEWERS.

The following anecdote is in circulation, and came to our knowledge through a channel that leaves us very little reason to doubt its accuracy and authenticity. In the review of Lord Byron's earlier productions, the Edinburgh Critics were very severe in their animadversions, and it somehow or other reached the noble Author's ears that this *cutting up* was not produced in the regular way of trade, but that he was indebted for it to a *quondam* college friend, with whom he had quarrelled at school, and who took this method of revenging himself. Aware of this circumstance, it is said, that, previous to the publication of Childe Harold, his Lordship addressed a letter to *Mr. Jefferies*, intimating to him his knowledge of the fact, and *gently hinting* that he considered the surrender of the pages of a literary Journal, to gratify private pique and personal malignity, to be both partial and unfair. He disclaimed having cherished an "equal hate" against his adversary since the days of their youthful contention, and concluded by stating to this

spirited Editor, that he would hold him personally responsible for any remarks on the forthcoming poem, that might appear harsh, uncandid, or invidious.

The result was, that the critique was penned in the usual way, and Lord Byron applauded to the very echo!!

EAGLE TRIBUTE.

In the description of the Caricature in our last Number, we noticed the similarity of the pursuits in which Lord Wellington and Mr. Bullock of the Museum had been engaged, and the success that had attended their Eagle-catching. We have since learnt that the custom in the Shetland Isles is, for every householder to present a fowl to the person who kills an Eagle, as an acknowledgment of the service he has performed in ridding them of a destructive bird of prey. It would be well if a similar tribute for rooting out the Eagles on the Peninsula were adopted; and, though it might cause a dearth of poultry, no one could grudge the payment of so small a matter for so great a benefit; and our brave soldiers, after *fairly* beating their opponents, would have reason to *chuckle* over their *fowl* play, and rejoice while regaling themselves with fine *chickens* at the expense of the *Gallic Cock*.

The New Disease.

Poet Jack was so poor, in a *garret* he lodg'd,
Where, asham'd by his friends to be seen,
He himself oft excus'd when for dinner they dodg'd,
And his lady's bad health made his screen.

One day, sorely press'd, not a lie to deceive,
He repell'd thus the ravenous pack:
"I grieve, but, my wife cannot comp'ny receive,
Since her desp'rate *Room-attic* attack."

On the new PATENT *for making* GUNPOWDER *from* SUGAR.

WEST India merchants can no more complain,
Though all distilleries instantly use grain;
For since from Sugar *Powder* can be made,
Great must their profits be, immense their trade;
And should they more repine, who will not scoff,
Since we all know their goods so well *go off*?

Sir F. BURDETT *to his* MOB ELECTORS *of* WESTMINSTER, *who claim a Right to the Hustings.*

"MY friends, I've experienc'd so many defeats,
I'm no longer the patron of *popular heats*;
And to burn these fine Hustings were surely a pity,
If you want *useless Wood*—you may go to the CITY."

On the FRENCH *fortifying* IRUN, *to secure their Retreat from the Peninsula.*

IN Spain, cried King Joseph, I'm surely undone,
Whenever I'm brought to my *last stand—I-run.*

On Mr. GEORGE EDEN'S *being ousted for* OXFORD, *at the* GENERAL ELECTION, *by Messrs.* LOCKHART *and* WRIGHT.

AUCKLAND'S son stands for Oxford, but 'gainst him, sad plight!
Learns his rivals *lock hearts*, and he cannot be *(W) right:*
Thus Oxford, poor Eden, in canvassing crost,
Finds no *Garden of Eden*, but—*Paradise lost!*

On ELLISTON'S playing HAMLET, *and on the* STATUE *of* SHAKSPEARE *over the Stove in New Drury.*

HONEST Shakspeare to *murder outright* in their rage
Is sure our new managers' hobby!
To effect this, they *mangle* him sore on the *stage*,
And *roast him* for this in the *Lobby.*

On the Occasional ADDRESS *at Drury being spoken for nine* successive *Nights.*

BYRON'S Address *nine nights* was spoke
Ere Elliston knock'd under—
That John Bull bore so long the joke,
Exceeds a *nine days' wonder!*

On the SEIZURE *of* 7000 *Guincas by Mr.* LAWLESS.

THE potent influence of gold,
Indeed, proves to be awful!
Since now it renders, as we're told,
A *Lawless* act quite *Lawful.*

REVIEW OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

FIAT JUSTITIA!

THOUGHTS ON THE STATE OF THE COUNTRY, &c. *By An* ELECTOR. *pp.* 173. *Printed for Hatchard, Piccadilly; and Richardson, Cornhill.*

THIS Pamphlet, which we regret our limits will not permit us to review at large, we have great pleasure in recommending to the consideration of the public. It is a plain, sensible, and well-written exposition of the existing state of political parties; and contains observations, not only upon them, but upon the most interesting points connected with our domestic and foreign policy, at once sound, acute, and convincing. The three heads into which this treatise is divided are,

The State of the Country;
The late Negociations for a New Ministry; and
The Disposition of Parties.

Under the first head will be found a satisfactory and luminous account of the causes, origin, and progress, of the late riots in the disturbed counties. The second affords a perfect view of the subject handled, and exposes the ambitious views of our overweening Aristocratic Faction, in strong but just colours. In the third part we have an able exposition of the nature, views, and

conduct, of all the parties into which the country is politically split, and though so literally à party question, we rejoice to observe, that this, as well as the preceding discussions, is penned without party spirit. The whole work is entitled to warm commendation for the loyal and constitutional principles it maintains; for the temper and fairness with which it treats every person and subject; and for the general information it conveys, in a way neither to be misrepresented nor misunderstood.

REJECTED ADDRESSES; OR, THE NEW THEATRUM POETARUM. *pp.* 126. 4*s.* 6*d.* *J. Miller, Bow Street.*

THE *Dioscuri* of old never shone together; but when CASTOR rose POLLUX set, and *vice versa*, when Pollux became elevated, Castor declined in the horizon. The present volume affords an example, that in modern times it is possible for two brothers to shine, and at least to acquire fame, if not immortality, together. This *Jeu d'Esprit* is the joint production of Messrs. James and Horace Smith, the authors of Highgate Tunnel, and several clever works of a humorous description; and we must say that it is long since we have seen any thing of the kind so well timed, so quickly written, and displaying so much of sterling wit and merit. Presuming on an excellent subject, our fraternal authors have imitated and burlesqued the peculiarities of style of a number of the best and worst writers of the present day, as rejected Candidates for the Drury Lane Laurel. The

oddity of this competition afforded them ample scope for humour, and they have availed themselves of the opportunity, with an ability which proves them eminently qualified for higher undertakings than any with which they have yet favoured the public. Messrs. Fitzgerald, Wordsworth, Cobbett, T. Moore, Southey, W. Scott, Lewis, Coleridge, Crabbe, Colman, the Hon. W. Spencer, Morning Post, Doctor Busby, Lord Byron, &c. &c. are all parodied with extreme felicity. It is impossible to resist the *vis comica* with which the work abounds; and so much have we been amused by its perusal, that we have been tempted to borrow large samples of excellence from its pages; but, as it is within the reach of every purse, we shall content ourselves with recommending it most heartily to every reader who can be entertained with a display of great fancy and powers of raillery without malignity, and satire unmixed with ill humour.

The following are the only examples we shall afford—

Of W. T. Fitzgerald:

> Bless every man possessed of aught to give;
> Long may Long Tilney Wellesley Long Pole live;
> God bless the army, bless their coats of scarlet,
> God bless the navy, bless the Princess Charlotte,
> God bless the guards, though worsted Gallia scoff,
> God bless their pig-tails, though they're now cut off;
> And oh, in Downing Street should Old Nick revel,
> England's prime minister, then bless the Devil!

Of W. Wordsworth:

> My brother Jack was nine in May,
> And I was eight on new year's day;
> So in Kate Wilson's shop
> Papa (he's my papa and Jack's),
> Bought me, last week, a doll of wax,
> And brother Jack a top.

Jack's in his pouts, and this it is,
He thinks mine came to more than his,
So to my drawer he goes,
Takes out the doll, and oh, my stars!
He pokes her head between the bars,
And melts off half her nose!

Quite cross, a bit of string I beg,
And tie it to his peg-top's peg,
And bang, with might and main,
Its head against the parlour door:
Off flies the head, and hits the floor,
And breaks a window pane.

This made him cry with rage and spite:
Well, let him cry, it serves him right.
A pretty thing, forsooth!
If he's to melt, all scalding hot,
Half my doll's nose, and I am not
To draw his peg-top's tooth!

[*Her appearance on the stage.*]

At first I caught hold of the wing,
And kept away; but Mr Thing-
umbob, the prompter man,
Gave with his hand my chaise a shove,
And said, Go on, my pretty love,
Speak to 'em little Nan.

You've only got to curtsey, whisp-
er, hold your chin up, laugh and lisp,
And then you're sure to take:
I've known the day when brats not quite
Thirteen got fifty pounds a night,
Then why not Nancy Lake?

Of Lord Byron:

For what is Hamlet, but a hare in march?
And what is Brutus, but a croaking owl?
And what is Rolla? Cupid steep'd in starch,
Orlando's helmet in Augustine's cowl.
Shakspeare, how true thine adage, "fair is foul;"
To him whose soul is with fruition fraught,
The song of Braham is an Irish howl,
Thinking is but an idle waste of thought,
And nought is every thing, and every thing is nought.

Of T. Moore:

And dear is the Emerald Isle of the Ocean,
Whose daughters are fair as the foam of the wave,
Whose sons, unaccustom'd to rebel commotion,
Though joyous are sober, though peaceful are brave.

Of the Hon. W. Spencer:

Sobriety cease to be sober,
Cease labour to dig and to delve,
All hail to this tenth of October,
One thousand eight hundred and twelve.
Hah! whom do my peepers remark?
'Tis Hebe with Jupiter's jug;
Oh no, 'tis the pride of the Park,
Fair Lady Elizabeth Mugg.

Of S. T. Coleridge:

Oh, Mr. Whitbread! fie upon you, Sir!
I think you should have built a colonnade.
When tender Beauty, looking for her coach,
Protrudes her gloveless hand, perceives the shower,
And draws the tippet closer round her throat,
Perchance her coach stands half a dozen off,
And, ere she mounts the step, the oozing mud
Soaks through her pale kid slipper. On the morrow
She coughs at breakfast, and her gruff papa
Cries, "There you go! this comes of playhouses!"
To build no portico is penny wise:
Heaven grant it prove not in the end pound foolish!

Nought born on earth should die. On hackney stands
I reverence the coachman who cries, "Gee,"
And spares the lash. When I behold a spider
Prey on a fly, a magpie on a worm,
Or view a butcher with horn-handled knife,
Slaughter a tender lamb as dead as mutton,
Indeed, indeed, I'm very, very sick!

[*Exit hastily.*

Of Dr. Busby:

I sing how casual bricks, in airy climb,
Encounter'd casual horse-hair, casual lime;

How rafters borne through wond'ring clouds elate,
Kiss'd in their slope blue elemental slate,
Clasp'd solid beams in chance-directed fury,
And gave to birth our renovated Drury.

Of the Rev. G. Crabbe:

What various swarms our motley walls contain!
Fashion from Moorfields, honour from Chick Lane;
Bankers from Paper Buildings here resort,
Bankrupts from Golden Square and Riches Court;
From the Haymarket canting rogues in grain,
Gulls from the Poultry, sots from Water Lane;
The lottery cormorant, the auction shark,
The full price master, and the half price clerk;
Boys who long linger at the gallery door,
With pence twice five, they want but twopence more.
Till some Samaritan the twopence spares,
And sends them jumping up the gallery stairs.
Critics we boast who ne'er their malice baulk,
But talk their minds, we wish they'd mind their talk;
Big wordied bullies, who by quarrels live,
Who give the lie, and tell the lie they give;
Jews from St. Mary Axe, for jobs so wary,
That for old clothes they'd even axe St. Mary;
And bucks, with pockets empty as their pate,
Lax in their gaiters, laxer in their gait,
Who oft, when we our house lock up, carouse
With tippling tipstaves in a lock-up house.

We cannot refrain from again advising a perusal of this able little production. It will repay the reader with many a laugh, and amuse the million, while it is not beneath the praise of the scholar.

THEATRES.

Cum tabulis animum censoris sumet honesti.

HORACE.

COVENT GARDEN.

THE fears we expressed in our last number have been realised—they have been surpassed. Fortunately for us we had no hopes, for if we had, they would have been most grievously disappointed.

From the judgment displayed by Mr. Harris, the manager, in persevering in the obtrusion of foolish *spectacular dramas* upon the public for four nights out of six, we had small occasion for the exercise of our faculties to be enabled to predict that this rage would continue to mark his conduct and degrade the stage. What we anticipated has come to pass. Untaught by meagre houses and beggarly returns from the treasury—by the silent contempt of empty benches, or the loud torrent of public opinion expressed against the usurpation of the stage by these monstrous absurdities, to the exclusion of common sense and legitimate theatrical productions, Mr. Harris seems determined to pursue his freak, and force his favourite mummeries upon the town, or sink with his *concern* to ruin in the attempt. We will tell him plainly that he has no chance of success in the former, and that, if he does not alter his course, the latter will be speedy as it is inevitable.

On Tuesday night, the 6th October, was produced, from the pen of Mr. Dimond, a *new grand* ROMANTICK DRAMA, called the ÆTHIOP, or *The Child of the Desert*; of which we may say, the drama is worthy of its author, the author of his drama—Not among those (if such there be, which we think impossible)—not among those, who expect from this writer either probability, sense, nature, character, or purity of style; but belonging to that numerous class who judge him to be equally destitute of capacity for grandeur of conception or novelty of thought, for felicity of language or congruity of sentiment, for sterling wit or agreeable humour, for expansion of mind or superiority of intellect, we cannot but lament that the occupation of the stage is so open to him as to put it in his power to add another tide to the flood of folly and false taste with which he has already inundated it, and to which, as we last month complained, we were compelled to submit three days in the week for so much of the season as had then passed. It seems the measure of our sufferings was not yet full, and we must now undergo the *nausea repetita* EVERY night, or abstain from visiting Covent Garden.

We shall now proceed to a more detailed examination of this grand romance. The story of the Æthiop consists of the expedients resorted to by the Caliph *Haroun Alraschid* to prove the affections of his favourite Sultana Sephania, whom he has no reason to suspect, except from her being the daughter of the Sultan Ali, whom his father had deposed and assassinated; and of the efforts and plots of Almanzar, the

brother of Ali, to procure the death of Alraschid, and restore to the throne of his murdered sire Orazmin, the son of Ali, whom he had reared in the deserts of Arabia during fifteen years. In furtherance of these plots the tribe of Ali are found residing in Bagdat, or rather *under* Bagdut, in subterraneous caverns pertaining to their burial ground, and which are large enough to contain all these warriors. Haroun discovers their secret by the inadvertency of a messenger, who is sent to apprize Sephania of their designs in regard to cutting the throat of her dear husband, and most wilfully drops the information at the feet of Giafar the Caliph's Vizier. The Caliph upon this, resolving not to be outdone in folly, disguises himself in a blackened face and an outré dress, and finds his way with Almanzar and Orazmin to the sepulchre of Ali, where he wisely trusts himself alone in the midst of his intended murderers. Here he imposes on their credulity by pretending to supernatural powers, but is detected by Almanzar, who is about to sacrifice him, when by a turn of good luck he is told that by turning a wheel he will lay open the cavern: the wheel he turns accordingly, and down walk Giafar and the guards, pretending that the magic of the Æthiop's wand precludes them from seeing the tribe of Ali by whom they are surrounded; and this *ruse* completes the imposition which the Caliph desired to perfect on these sensible and ferocious gentry. After a variety of silly adventures, all turning upon the same miraculous but *probable and consistent* pivot, Almanzar and Orazmin arrive to butcher Haroun in his saloon, where they find him, "sham Abraham," fast asleep, and just as they are about to plunge the poignard in his breast, out jumps the sultana to save him, and a great deal of pathetic flourishes ensue, till Almanzar, who is determined to have a murder at last, again advances: the Caliph starts up, and by a *coup de scene* a number of archers appear with bows drawn ready to shoot the invited assassin. A kind of reconciliation takes place, and the piece concludes. Such is the main story, which our readers will agree with us is indeed "*romantic*" enough, if by romantic we are to understand "wild, improbable, false;"—*vide Lexicon*. But there is, besides, an underplot as *totally unconnected* with the main plot as with the Merry Wives of Windsor, in which one of the French eastern tales in "*Les Gages Touches*" is dramatized. What could have recommended it we know not, except that Mr. Dimond might fancy that his *high flown* wanted the alloy of some *low*, and therefore ventured to display as comic before an enlightened audience the disgusting representation of a young wife subjected to the impotent libertinism of two aged dotards, upon whom she revenges herself, by cramming them into chests, and sending for their wives to liberate their truant henpecked lords—the Emir and Cadi.

Such are the outlines of this new attempt of Mr. Dimond at that species of entertainment, which is at best but a blot upon the stage, and a reproach upon our national character for information and sound judgment. Foreigners have denied our claims to taste—thank Heaven! they do not see us at these *spectacles*, or the sentence would become definite beyond repeal—to the "*quod genus hoc hominum?*"—What kind of men are these Londoners? The answer would justly be, "Bœotians! most stupid Bœotians! to relish or permit such worthless trash in their national theatres."

From the beginning to the end, so "weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable," were the uses made of even these absurd materials, that it appeared as if, instead of the Child of the Desert, the subject dramatized was the unproductive desert itself; in order to show how barren, same, dull, and monotonous a collection of *dry stuff* could by human nature be endured; and, to say the truth, the audience for a long time bore it like camels. We do most conscientiously believe that the whole performance did not beguile a single tear, or, we were going to add, exact one smile; but we do remem-

her some of the sentimental and pathetic parts were so ludicrous, that they extorted bursts of laughter.

As we observed on a former occasion, Mr. Harris appears to imagine, that by displaying Mrs. H. Johnson he is sure to delight and captivate the town. She is pre-eminently magnificent in this new piece as a *favourite Sultana*. For our parts, we are far from wishing to drag private life into public consideration; but the perpetual obtrusion of this lady we confess fills us with disgust. When we hear her inculcating virtuous sentiments, or declaiming on conjugal or maternal affection with all her meretricious airs, a thrill of horror shoots across our mind; and, instead of entertainment or pleasure, we experience feelings as if we heard laughter from a grave, or shouts of mirth from a sepulchre.

We shall shortly dismiss the other remarks we had intended to offer on this drama, as we observe, with satisfaction, that the public has pronounced sentence upon it, and that it has been *starved out of the Theatre*. The character of Almanzar is that of a cowardly, bullying assassin, always ready to stab man, woman, or child, and particularly the two latter, but never executing his purposes. Orazmin is a mixture of childish absurdity rendered impious by the author, and Haroun a Fool of no Quality. The intended comic part is pre-eminently ridiculous —a smuggler of sentiment, and his wife of the same stamp, with two gloating doting magistrates and their termagant wives, complete the dramatis personæ.

The scenery is splendid, but the machinery most absurd, and introduced without reason, merely for effect—The music is noise, and the only thing in the whole that can be endured is a song most sweetly warbled by BROADHURST, who is rising rapidly in the opinion of the public. —To conclude; this Spectacle, after all the vast expense lavished upon it, has lingered through empty houses for ten days or a fortnight, and taught Mr. Harris a dear lesson, to the same effect which we endeavour to inculcate in the Satirist, and which he may have monthly for Half-a-Crown, until he attends to our salutary counsels and advice.

SCHNEIDERKINS,

A Farce, from the pen of Mr. T. Dibdin, was produced on Friday the 16th at this Theatre, from which we infer, that he thinks it too much to favour *One* House with the whole effect of his great abilities; and while he wisely confines his efforts to prompting for Drury Lane, he generously furnishes Covent Garden with his writings. It would, on the present occasion, have been no terrible loss to the latter if he had bestowed his Farce into the bargain upon his Promptership. It is a flimsy, ill-contrived, and unentertaining production, dull, common-place, uninteresting—with one or two good scenes, half a dozen decent puns, and a very short example of smart dialogue; the "rest is leather and prunella."—These *excellences* not being sufficient to constitute a favourite farce, *Schneiderkins*, notwithstanding the versatile genius of Mathews (who assumes various characters and supports them all admirably), and the dry whimsicality of Liston, proves so dull and fatiguing, that it must be laid speedily on the oblivious shelf.

BURGOYNE'S Opera of the Lord of the Manor was revived on Saturday, and proves eminently attractive.—The respectability and fulness of the house on its representations ought to convince the managers that proper management will produce proper returns.

Several new Performers have been introduced since our last, to whom, with the exception of Miss Cooke, who with a good figure possesses talents favourable to an opinion that she will be an acquision to the stage, the words in Macbeth may be applied, for they

"Come like shadows—so depart."

DRURY LANE

OPENED on the 10th with Hamlet, the Devil to Pay, and an aperient Address, prepared by Lord Byron, and miserably spouted by Mr. Elliston.

The Public have been so worried with descriptions of this Theatre, and criticisms on this and other Addresses, that we shall endeavour to condense what occurs to us on these subjects into as narrow limits as possible. To say any thing new is scarcely possible; and we may therefore be excused for conciseness, though the topics are large and fruitful. Of the opening Address, having made it the text for a few remarks in the body of our work, we shall here say nothing further, than that we consider it inferior to the noble Author's known abilities, and unworthy of the occasion. Little of excellence could be expected from the monstrously absurd method pursued by the Committee of Management, who advertised for Addresses from all the Poets and Pretenders of the day, pledging themselves that the best of those transmitted under certain forms should be selected and spoken. They received 112; some doubtless possessing considerable merit; but the Judges not being altogether pleased with any one of them, resolved to reject them all, and solicit Lord Byron to construct a poem according to certain ideas with which they furnished him, and which may in some measure account for the mediocrity of the verses. Upon this procedure all we shall observe is, that it was obviously unjust, partial, and a scandalous desertion from the standard they themselves had raised, uncalled for, and the creature of their own sapient head-pieces. It was a breach of faith, and a lapse from honour only equalled by the "*Tom-foolery*" of the original project. The obvious course would have been to afford those hints to the author of the best Prologue sent in, which they gave to Lord Byron.

With regard to the Theatre itself, internally it is beautiful, externally inconvenient. When the green curtain is down, nothing can exceed the elegance, the grace, the glitter, and gaiety of its appearance: it is a fairy temple for the lighter Muse; a luxuriance of taste, and profusion of fancy, are its characteristics. The shape of the audience part an irregular conchoid, or horse-shoe widened at the open part towards the stage, and gorgeously adorned. The aspect of the stage is pre eminently fine, and we are inclined to bestow on the house in this point of view the most unqualified admiration. It is truly a splendid monument of architectural talents; in form the most perfect we ever saw, adapted to a theatre; and in ornaments the most gay and profuse, without being tawdry or overloaded.

We have been speaking of the theatre as offered to the eye before the performances commence. When the curtain rises, some of its most singular beauties are converted into glaring defects, which augment as the business of the stage proceeds, till, in many instances, they produce incongruities the most absurd, and inconsistencies the most ridiculous. In the representation of familiar and low life, the whole delusion of the scene is destroyed by the magnificent pillars and brilliant lamps immediately adjunct to a thatched roof or a cottage chimney. The scenery too, heretofore displayed in the new theatre, has contributed greatly to increase this anomaly. Though individually pretty, the scenes are combined with so utter a disregard to truth, nature, and probability, as to furnish the most opposite realities closely linked together in fiction. A kitchen of an inn is collaterally eked out by a Gothic arch and grand colonnade. At midnight we have smart broad-day landscapes; private rooms are vast and splendid halls: in fine, every thing is theatrical; nothing consonant, just, and natural. Another very striking disadvantage arises from the advanced situation of the speakers upon the stage. In tragedy, it occasions deformity; in comedy, absurdity. The defects are so palpable, and so perpetual in recurrence, that it is utterly impossible to be deceived by the best constructed dramatic composition, performed by the best actors. We are everlastingly reminded that all we see is only fictitious; and thus the greatest interest, the highest pow-

ers, the most enlightened principles and uses of theatrical representation, are neutralized and subverted. For example, two actors are communicating a secret, "but soft, who comes?" and they have to run back half a mile to allow themselves the possibility of interruption: in more grave scenes the effect is still worse, and it is painful to behold every tragic performer in their concluding sentences obliged to direct their sole attention to preparation for getting decently off without turning their posterior parts at once bluntly to the audience. Like the fellows at prayers in the Critic, they may well exclaim, "Now we are here, how are we to get off?" and like them, they are compelled to "steal! steal! steal!" and edge away most sneakingly, while they pronounce the concluding lines of their part, though these are perhaps denunciations of vengeance, or impassioned bursts of woe.

The entrances and communications to and about the house are at once superb and convenient; the stairs spacious and grand, and adorned with two admirable specimens of *fresco* painting, which merit the attention of every visitor to the theatre. A reform has been made in this part, for which alone Mr. Wyatt is entitled to the highest approbation: we allude to the omission altogether of that scene of noise, folly, confusion, and vice, known in former theatres by the appellation of the Basket, and by the splendid device by which he has thrown the Saloon to a distance from the virtuous portion of the audience, and as completely as possible rendered it unnecessary for that class to mingle with another, to use the Opera House phrase, "more readily to be known than described." To make amends however for consulting decency and propriety in this respect, we have in the Saloon itself a temple to debauchery, worthy of the *Paphian* Queen. Ottomans, Sofas, reclining Cushions, and every thing that can contribute to luxury, or invite to the indulgence of those propensities most peculiar to theatrical lobbies, are here spread out with a liberality worthy of a better cause. Vice has his throne erected here—"here reigns and revels." A more *heinous comment* upon the morals of the age was never given in any country, than by this Saloon, which offers the most superb portion of the national theatre as a temptation to licentiousness and encouragement to depravity.

The outside of the New Theatre is only remarkable for a simplicity closely allied to poverty and meanness, and a plainness congenial with heaviness and deformity. It is marvellously naked of every species of accommodation. There is nothing to shelter from the "pelting of the pitiless storm." In few words, there is not a single convenience attached to the building. The extravagance of the Saloon might *here* have been well applied.

Having occupied so much space with the theatre, we can bestow but little of our attention on the performers and performances. We must be contented for the present with massing them. The plays have been, speaking generally, well chosen; the performers, speaking generally, have deserved no praise. The company cannot get up Tragedy; and what they have attempted have been most cruelly mangled. In Comedy, they have been somewhat more successful; but not so well as ought to be expected; and in Opera they have been only distinguished for meagre second rate. Bannister and Miss Duncan have latterly evinced their super-excellence; but on the earlier nights we were disgusted by acting of a very different description. Elliston and Mrs. Edwin mistake themselves much, and even some of our greatest comic favourites appear to have improved the wrong way, by their performances at small theatres. To the two last-named particularly, and to others, who we hope will take the hint without compelling us to speak more intelligibly and plainly, we have to remark, that

impudence and self-sufficiency are as intolerable upon the stage, as ease and natural humour are pleasing. It is exceedingly hurtful, even to talent, to substitute pertness for vivacity, carelessness for mastery, rant for feeling, and an assumption of universal capacity for the possession of real ability for the perfect representation of any one character.

Two new Performers, Mr. Philips and Mr. Gladstanes, have been brought out as the Duke and Orlando, in As You like It. The former is a correct and useful actor in parts requiring exertions similar to those befitting the Duke. The latter has no qualifications whatever.

THE LYCEUM

Closed on the 7th, with a presumptuous Address from the Managers. A laughable farce, entitled "The West Wind," had been performed through the preceding week with considerable applause. It is a humorous trifle.—The season has been very unproductive.

THE HAYMARKET

Closed on the Friday following, after a very good season, and with an appropriate Address, delivered with much feeling by Mr. Terry.